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**Desert**  
MAGAZINE

Volume 38, Number 2

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A solitary desert primrose in contrast to the sandy desert floor in the Anza-Borrego State Park. Photo by David Muench, Santa Barbara, California.

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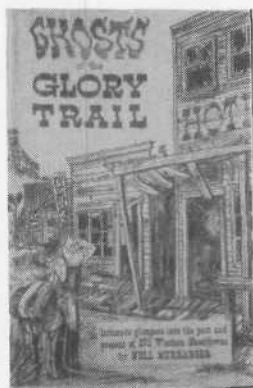
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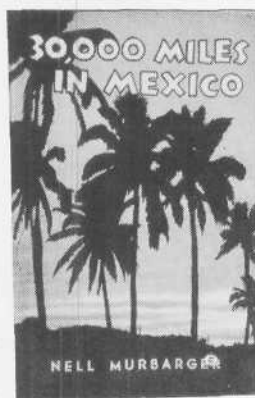
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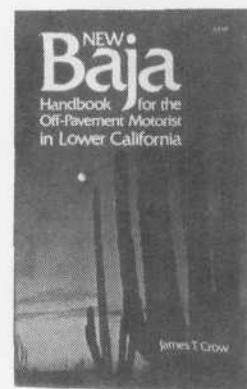
The discovery of a rare old bottle opens up a new understanding of life at an earlier period. A collection of old medicine bottles takes one back to a slower, less-complicated life-style. A time when a concoction of aromatic biters could cure almost anything. A time

when an analyst was unheard of and Dr. Pierce's Golden Medical Discovery took care of "humors and vapors."

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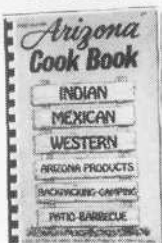
What kind of vehicles go to Baja? All kinds—cars, station wagons, trucks, buses, buggies, bikes and Broncos. The common sense of getting ready, when to go, how long to stay, how much to spend, and what to take along . . . all are covered in this comprehensive handbook.

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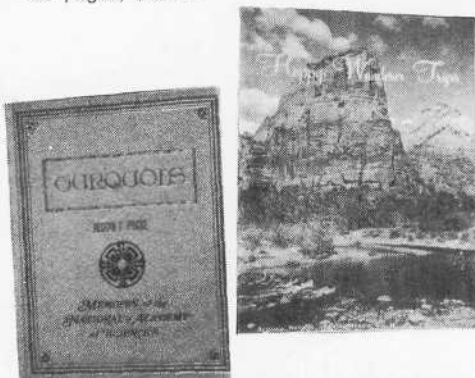
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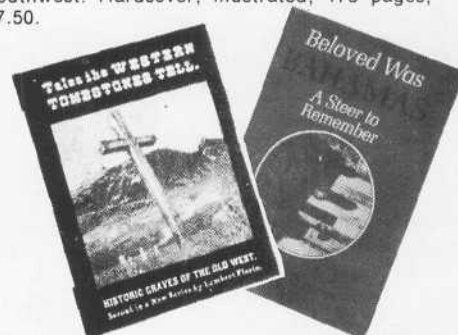
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# *It's Fitting!*



*The little ghost town of Fitting nestles at the eastern end of Spring Valley Canyon. Buildings viewed from the Bonanza King Mine road represent the "upper section of town."*

by MARY FRANCES STRONG

Photos by Jerry Strong

**W**E WERE rapidly descending the narrow confines of Spring Valley Canyon on the eastern slope of Nevada's Humboldt Range. As we rounded a sharp curve at the canyon's outplain, the road passed through one of the most picturesque little ghost towns we had seen during many years of travel. "It's Fitting!" Jerry exclaimed, as he braked to a stop before we passed it by. Quickly and easily, we had located the objectives of our trip—the gold placers in Spring Canyon, Bonanza King Mine and the former settlement of Fitting.

Our love affair with Fitting began at first sight. Why? We cannot answer that

question. It just happened. To others, this small group of buildings may seem to be the same as any other old mining camp. For us, Fitting had a "special air" about it. There was almost the feeling of expectancy, as if at any moment people would appear. Even a stage roaring down the road seemed not unlikely.

Though only a small number of buildings remained, their varied architecture gave personality to the old camp. Among them were small cabins with shed-type roofs—their unpainted boards now bleached and weathered to a pleasant silver-gray. Some utilized board and bat construction, and at least two homes



could be called "imposing," if one considers where and when they were built.

Walking around only increased the excitement we felt. There was evidence of happy living here. Many of the little touches had been added which turn a cabin into a home. At one house, a garden plot had been carefully lined with colorful rocks containing azurite and malachite. Close by was a sizable, rock-faced root cellar for storing a "bountiful crop." A spring had been tapped to provide running water. Trees had been planted and porches built. Many of Fitting's residents must have enjoyed watching traffic go by.

It was late October and Jack Frost had already paid a visit to Fitting. Old, gnarled trees in a small orchard wore leaves of deep red and bright yellow. Massive clusters of golden blooms on giant clumps of rabbit brush cast the lovely glow of autumn over the land. From an overflow pipe, falling water tinkled like wind chimes as it splashed on rocks in the creek bed below. Huge cottonwood trees lined the canyon floor. Their leaves fluttered in the breeze like gaudy-yellow butterflies and emitted a quaking rustle that seemed to warn winter was not too far away.

Evidence of extensive mining was everywhere. Tremendous piles of dredge tailings lined the canyon up and downstream of Fitting. A large pond lay immediately east. On the hill south of camp, the headframe of the Bonanza King Mine stood guard over a deep shaft.

Discovered in 1868, the Eagle Mine (later (Bonanza King) became the only important lode mine in the Spring Valley District. Re-located several times, the property was eventually purchased by the Oakland Mill and Mining Company. It began development in 1873 and erected a 15-stamp mill in 1874. One year later, the operation had failed. From 1905 to 1908, the Bonanza King Mine Company tried its luck but production was small.

The vein is in a dioritic dike cutting porphyritic rhyolite of the Triassic Koi-patu formation. Ore minerals included sphalerite, galena and pyrite with tetrahedrite occurring in the richest ore. Huge adits, shafts and raises remain from the frantic search for high-grade orebodies. They are open and highly dangerous.

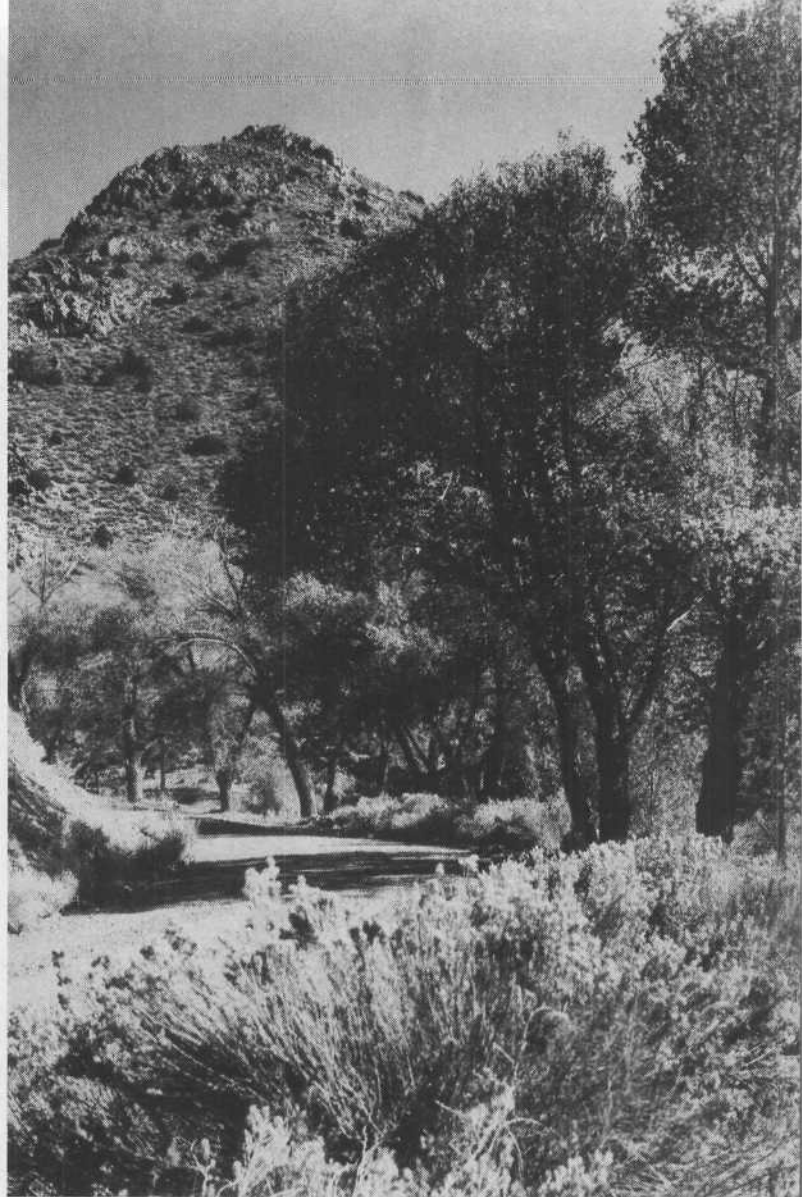
Evidently, living quarters had been

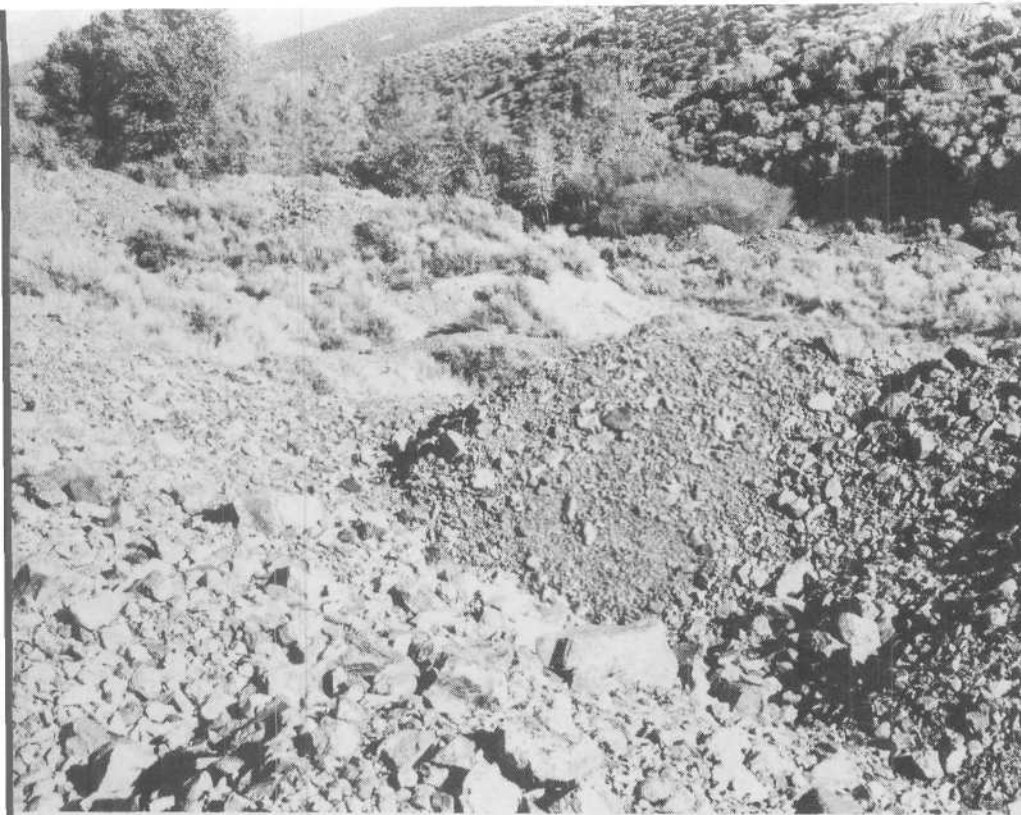
*Right: A good, graded road leads up Limerick Canyon.*

*This grove of cottonwood trees offers a good pull-out area for a coffee break. It was probably a way-station site in the early days.*

*Below: A "triplex" dwelling and former root cellar still remain at Fitting.*

*An old orchard is still alive and there was evidence of a substantial garden plot.*





*Great piles of dredge tailings line the canyon floor both east and west of Fitting. Considerable gold was found in the placer deposits.*

built at the mine site, as we noted great quantities of broken bottles and dishes. Old foundations and a small section of a brick building still stand. A sizable area is covered with miscellaneous parts of mining equipment along with an incredible amount of junk.

Originally called Spring Valley, Fitting came into existence as did most camps—due to the needs of miners. It probably dates back to the early 1870's, when a supply point and place to "bend an elbow" with friends was a necessity in this remote and rugged region. Connection with the outside world was via a twice-weekly stage to Lovelock. Fitting boasted a general store, saloon and supported a post office from 1905 to 1910.

The rich placer ground in the bottom of Spring Valley Canyon was discovered in 1881. Over the next three decades, it was worked primarily by Orientals. In 1911, The Federal Mining Company of Chicago built a 2000-cubic-yard dredge which operated for three years. Recorded production for the district amounts to ten million dollars, but this includes the rich American Canyon placers immediately south. Since the dredging, placering has continued intermittently.

Mining followed a pattern in the early days. The "great white hope" for a fortune—the lode mine—would, at first, produce high-grade ore. When this ran

out, they faltered and failed. Many never produced again, though low-grade ore remained.

With placer deposits, it was another story. Most placer ground was heavily hand-worked in the beginning. If it were feasible, dredges were used later to go over the ground. Even though the bulk of the gold had been recovered, the deposits were never idle for long.

During the years of the Great Depression (1930's), many a man kept his family going by working old placer deposits. Today, "gold seeking" has become a popular recreational activity. Armed with portable dry-washers and sluice boxes, hobbyists spend weekends and vacations working various deposits. It may not be assumed, however, that because a mining claim is not posted it has been abandoned. Before working any ground, a check must be made as to the ownership of the claim.

We lingered long at Fitting, savoring the nostalgia and enjoying the touch of sun on such a crisp fall day. The old dredge pond, piles and piles of tailings, debris and excavations at the Bonanza King mine and the remnants of the little town were reminiscent of the Colorado mining camps where I spent my early youth.

Jerry and I speculated Fitting's attraction might be due to the fact people had

lived there, intermittently, over the last 100 years. It had not been abandoned, only idle at times! One house had recently been fixed up. Curtains hung at the windows and a neat board and wire fence enclosed it. We assumed it was still being used. Reluctant to leave, but with the sun casting long shadows and a chill on the air, we said our goodbyes to the little mining camp.

History buffs leaving Highway 40 at Oreana (originally Oreana Junction) and heading up State Route 50 to visit Fitting, will need at least a full day in which to explore the area. Great temptation to digress from their objective will meet, since the road leads through scenic and historical mining country.

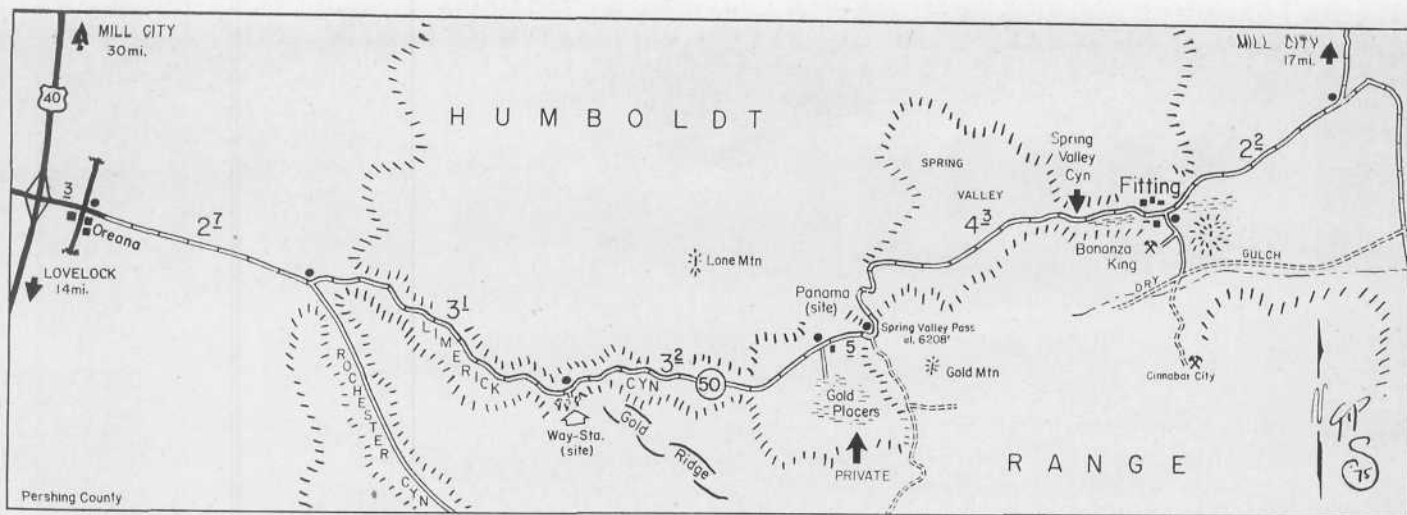
Less than three miles from Oreana, the road divides. Keep left. The right fork leads to Rochester—a famed mining area dating back to the 1860's. Plan to visit it another day. The graded road now winds up through Limerick Canyon and, almost at once, you will begin to see evidence of mining. At a point 3.1 miles from the junction, a grove of cottonwood trees provide an excellent site for a coffee break. Faint trails, leading south up Gold Ridge, can be seen from this point, which was probably the site of an early-day way-station.

Another four miles dumps you out into an high valley, which was an important link with the "high road" to the silver strikes in Rochester Canyon. The road is still clearly visible snaking its way south over the mountain peaks. Four-wheel-drive is recommended. Though gold had been mined in the Rochester District since the 1860's, it wasn't until 1912 that rich silver ores were discovered. Due to the lesser grade up Limerick Canyon, this route was used to haul heavy supplies to the budding camp.

The valley was also an ideal location for an overnight rest stop and the small settlement of Panama sprang up. A two-story hotel and saloon provided the amenities dear to the hearts of freighters and mining men. In later years, Panama had one illustrious resident—a former president of the United States! After leaving the White House, Herbert Hoover returned to his profession of mining engineer. In 1936, he leased several claims near Panama and spent two years in the area.

We found mining still going strong at Panama. "Posted" signs had been noted





along the road and several springs were being utilized for the placer operations of the Limerick Canyon Gold Company. Stopping to watch mining activities, we met the congenial owner, Dave Duffy. "Our system is simple," Dave told us. He explained that ore was picked up by a skip loader and transported to a large hopper. Next, it was conveyed to a rotary washer. After being moistened and screened, fines passed over a series of riffles for recovery of the gold.

Dave appeared to be quite familiar with the region and imparted a great deal about its history. Upon leaving we remarked, "Maybe we will see you next year." "No," was Dave's reply. "We will be through here by next spring." Who knows, perhaps someone else will

be working the ground in the hope Dave missed a few gold nuggets.

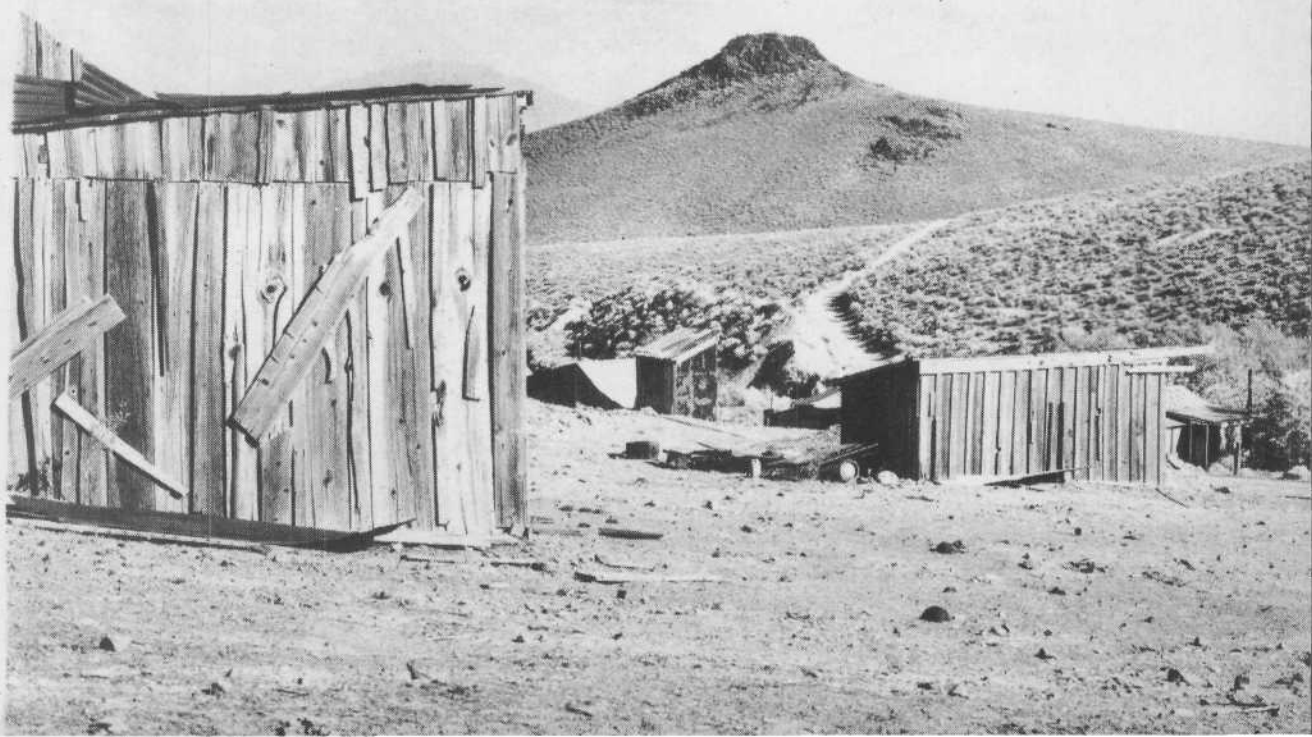
From the site of Panama, where only the saloon building remains, the road climbs to the crest of 6200-foot, Spring Valley Pass. You can park on this very narrow ridge and have a commanding view of two valleys and towering peaks of the Humboldt Range. Pinching to one-lane width, as it quickly drops down the mountainside, the road crosses Spring Valley Canyon and descends Spring Valley Canyon to Fitting. Along the way are old mines, trees marking old cabin sites and long rows of peaked gravel mounds left by the dredge.

Dave Duffy had told us that Fitting's placers probably were last worked by George Proctor in 1948. He also had

given us some information we were saddened to hear. It seemed there was a strong possibility that the Bureau of Land Management would raze all but one building at Fitting. This was not happy news for many people living in the surrounding area. They felt the picturesque little camp should be preserved. Perhaps B.L.M. will have a change of heart, since its policy is now directed toward the protection of historical sites, rather than the destruction of them.

If Fitting is gone in body, it is not gone in spirit. A little settlement that could survive a hundred years of good and bad times will always live on in the hearts of those who lived there and in those of us who merely visited, but took home a memory which will never be forgotten. □

Most of the cabins were not painted. Time and exposure has given the wood an attractive silver-grey color. Road in background leads to the Bonanza King and Cinnabar City Mines.



# Tumbleweed

THREE MEN huddled around a tumbleweed last May near Indio, California. The air was hot and still as the men concentrated intensely on a small white box held by one of them. Slowly, carefully, he opened the box and the three watched in great anticipation as a small white moth fluttered from the box and landed on the tumbleweed. "It was just like opening up my wallet," quipped Leonard Zink. The men opened more boxes until 100 little moths had been released in the patch of tumbleweeds.

The three men were Bob Hawkes, United States Department of Agriculture entomologist; Leonard Zink, CALTRANS (California Department of Transportation) landscape specialist; and Bill Freer,

CALTRANS assistant maintenance superintendent. They had just launched an experiment in biological control of the bothersome, tumbling tumbleweed, the culmination of cooperative efforts of the United States Department of Agriculture's Research Service (ARS), the University of California at Riverside, and the California State's Departments of Agriculture and Transportation.

After years of correspondence with entomologists in Egypt, visits to Pakistan and research in the United States, Bob Hawkes, ARS entomologist specializing in the biological control of weeds, determined that this tiny moth from Pakistan—*Coleophora parthenica*—attacks only the tumbleweed and a closely relat-

ed plant, halogeton (a weed poisonous to livestock).

The idea of biological control is not new. Hand picking insect pests from a plant is the oldest known method of "applied biological control." Keeping toads in a garden to devour insect pests is another. These and other methods trace their beginnings back thousands of years. Yet we, today, are more concerned with "man-induced biological control," such as the introduction of the Vedalia Beetle, *Rodolia cardinalis* (ladybird beetle) for the control of cottony-cushion scale which threatened to all but destroy the citrus industry in California.

CALTRANS has been very interested in utilizing this method of control be-

Fig. 1. Newly hatched larvae feeds through the egg shell and into the leaf.

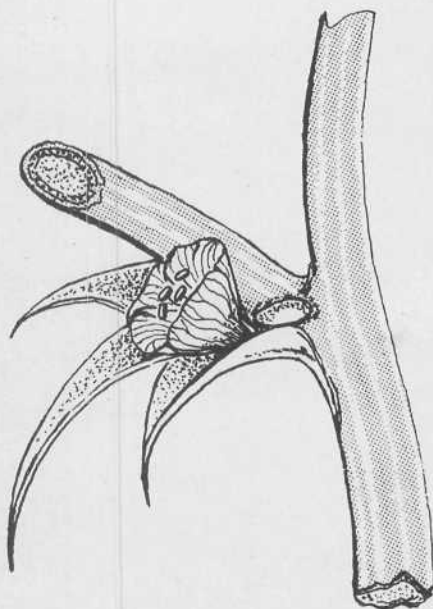
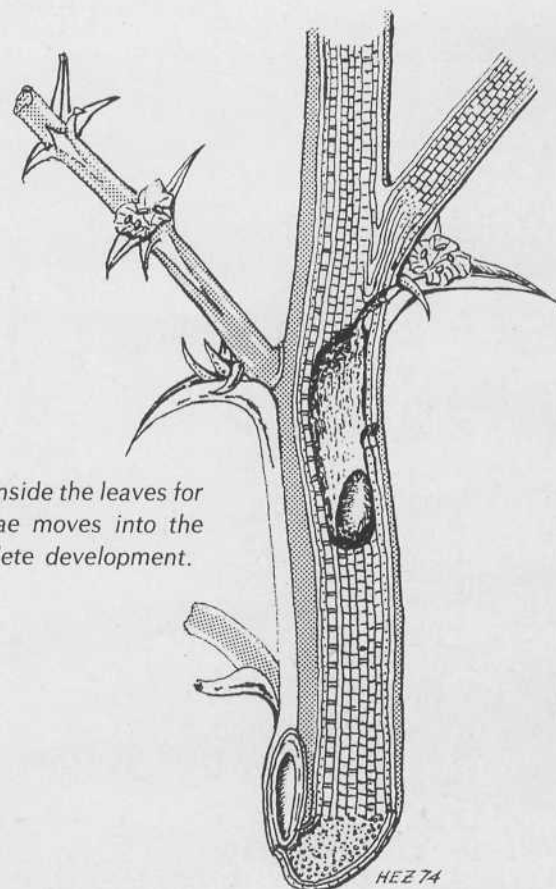


Fig. 2. After feeding inside the leaves for a few days, the larvae moves into the plant stems to complete development.





# Takes A Tumble

by JAMES L. LARSON

cause of the advantages it offers over herbicidal spraying:

1. The insect is generally continuous—always producing more insects to do the job.
2. There are no residues or toxic effects—as is often the case with herbicides and insecticides.
3. There is no movement or infestation to other plants—they feed only on specific plants or insects.
4. The insect is *effective*.

Already CALTRANS, in conjunction with the USDA and University of California, has had highly successful results treating the puncture vine along central California highways with two species of insects: *Microlarinus lareynii*, the seed

weevil, and *Microlarinus lypriformis*, the stem weevil.

In San Diego County, three insects imported from Australia were recently released to control physillid colonies living on Acacia trees. Physillids are tiny pests that suck chlorophyll from the tender new leaves.

But why the warfare on the tumbleweeds? After all, isn't it one of the most prestigious weeds in the United States? Why, it was thrust into stardom when Bob Nolan and the Sons of the Pioneers recorded their big hit, "Tumbling Tumbleweeds!" Whoever heard a hit tune about the Cut-leaf Bugleweed? Or, how about "drifting along with the woolly-podded milkweed?" What movie or television Western is complete without at

least one scene of the howling, gusty desert wind driving a herd of tumbleweeds? A ghost town wouldn't be a ghost town without our famous character rushing along the lonely streets in front of the relentless wind!

In spite of all this fame, the tumbleweed has, with all its rolling around, gotten a pretty bad name for itself in the Western and Central states, and increasingly on the South and Eastern coasts. For the past 100 years, this prickly pest has been "drifting along . . . pledging its love to the ground." With a single plant producing from 20,000 to 50,000 seeds, and being blown sometimes for miles, we've got a lot of tumbleweeds on our hands!

*continued*



Fig. 3. The larvae of the tumbleweed devouring moth before pupation.

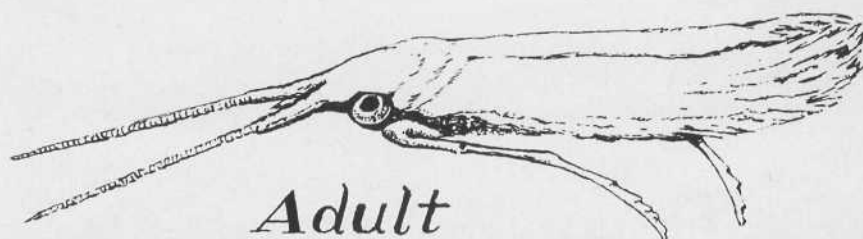


Fig. 4. The adult coleophora parthenica, natural enemy of the Russian thistle.

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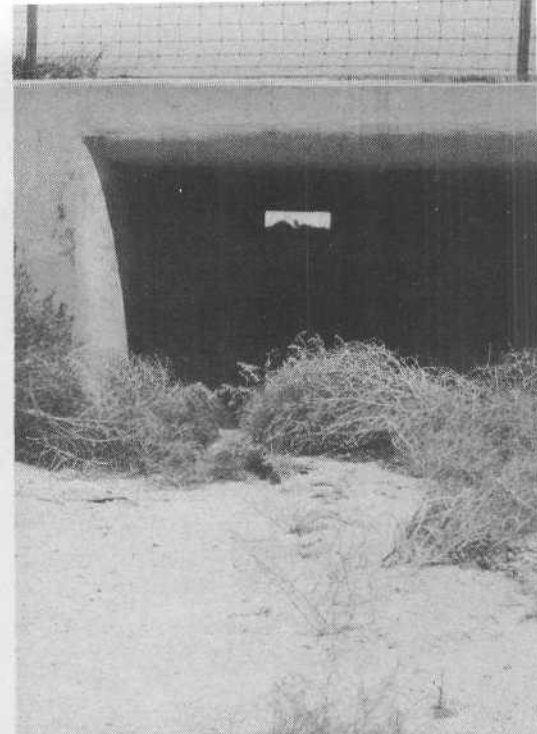
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Typical job of  
culvert clogging done by the  
always restless tumbleweed.

The cartwheeling creatures are blown in front of cars traveling the highways, causing a real safety hazard as drivers stop or swerve to avoid them; they pile up against fences, creating a fire hazard in dry, wind-blown areas; they clog up culverts, restricting drainage; they blow into canals and across cultivated farm lands, scattering seeds as they go. CALTRANS estimates that the weed costs taxpayers more than \$500,000 a year in maintenance costs along California highways. Other government agencies included, the cost is probably several million dollars a year.

Further complaints against them have been registered by both the State and Federal Agricultural Departments. This same wayward weed is the favorite food of the beetle leafhopper, which is the carrier of "curly top" virus of sugar beets and "blight" of tomatoes, spinach, beans and other vegetables.



For all its bother, the tumbleweed is not even native to the United States. Its true name is Russian Thistle (*Salsola ibérica*) and it was introduced to America in 1873 when it was accidentally sown near Scotland, South Dakota with some flax seed imported from Russia. In 1895, Mr. Dewey, USDA, reported 16 states and 13 Canadian provinces were tumbleweed infested, and issued warnings to the Pacific Coast states.

Because they were "imported," the tumbling tumbleweeds have no specific natural enemies in this country, so they are free to grow in abundance and to enormous sizes, reaching diameters of three to seven feet and larger. Until now, highway maintenance men have had to combat the bush along roadsides with frequent and costly spraying. Its effectiveness has been limited, as sprayed areas are constantly reinfested by rolling thistles blown for miles from adjacent lands.

Which brings us back to our little friend from Pakistan, *Coleophora parthenica*. It is a natural enemy of Russian thistle in Asia and parts of Africa, where the plants get little larger than 12 inches in diameter and are much fewer in number than in this country.

Each female moth lays up to 100 eggs, which are laid singly on the leaves of the tumbleweed and the newly hatching larvae feed directly through the egg shell and into the leaf (Fig. 1). The larvae are never exposed to the environment (Fig. 2). After feeding a few days inside the leaves, the larvae move to the stems of



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the plant and complete their development (Fig. 3). Inside the stems, the larvae feed for a time, cut a small porthole to the outside and pupate. Upon emerging from pupation, the moth exits via the porthole, mates, and starts the cycle over again (Fig. 4).

The action of the thistle breaking away at maturity and following the wind to spread seed also takes moths in pupae form into other thistle-infested areas.

Naturally, extensive testing must be done before any foreign insect can be released anywhere in the United States, and *Coleophora* was no exception. The possible disastrous consequences are obvious. So the "tumbleweed moth" underwent careful scrutiny under laboratory conditions. Tests have shown that the adult moths offer not problem to native flora—they simply do not feed. In most cases in the laboratory, females laid eggs on Russian thistle alone. In those rare instances where they laid eggs on other plants, the egg developed but the larvae seldom left the egg. It just remained inside and died. Occasionally, larvae emerged but lived only a short time in other plants other than Russian thistle.

Of the plants tested in the greenhouse, there was never any question as to the possibility of *Coleophora parthenica* using anything but Russian thistle or halogeton as a host. Since the larvae are not able to crawl, except within the confines of a self-made tunnel, larval movement from one plant to another is just about impossible.

Researchers, convinced that the tiny moth was "the one for the job," next had to gain approval for the release of the moth from the states adjoining California and from Canada and Mexico. All approved, and the right-of-way along Interstate 10, near Indio, was selected as one of the test sites.

Six weeks after the men huddled around that first tumbleweed, the trio returned to check on the progress—if any. Hawkes reached into the prickly weed, broke off a stem and sliced it into tiny sections, hoping to find a moth larva. To their delight, they discovered not one, but four larvae in the one stem! "The experiment is progressing better than we had hoped," Hawkes explained. If the experiment does prove to be successful, it will be a major victory in the campaign to combat undesirable vegetation without contributing to environmental pollution.

So now we'll just sit back and let *Coleophora* gnaw away. It looks like the end of an illustrious career for Mr. Tumbling Tumbleweed. Hm-m-m . . . "The Woolly-podded Milkweed" just might work up into a catchy little tune . . . □

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# Desert GHOSTS

by HOWARD NEAL

## Garlock, California

**LOCATION:** Garlock is located on Garlock Road, eight miles west of Highway 395, near Randsburg in the northern Mojave Desert.

**BRIEF HISTORY:** There are two types of gold in the desert. One is the much admired metal. The other, nearly as precious, is water. Garlock existed because of its water. First, when it was known as Cow Wells, it was a watering place for stock and a rest spot for desert travelers. Later, as Garlock, it became a mill site where ore from nearby mines was processed.

In the 1880's, cattlemen put up line shacks at the spot known as Cow Wells. Those floorless structures were among the first in the broad valley that separates the El Paso from the Rand Mountains. It was several years, though, before Cow Wells had a permanent resident.

A town was born at Cow Wells because the surrounding mountains contained gold, and those mining the gold needed water. Gold was discovered in the El Paso range

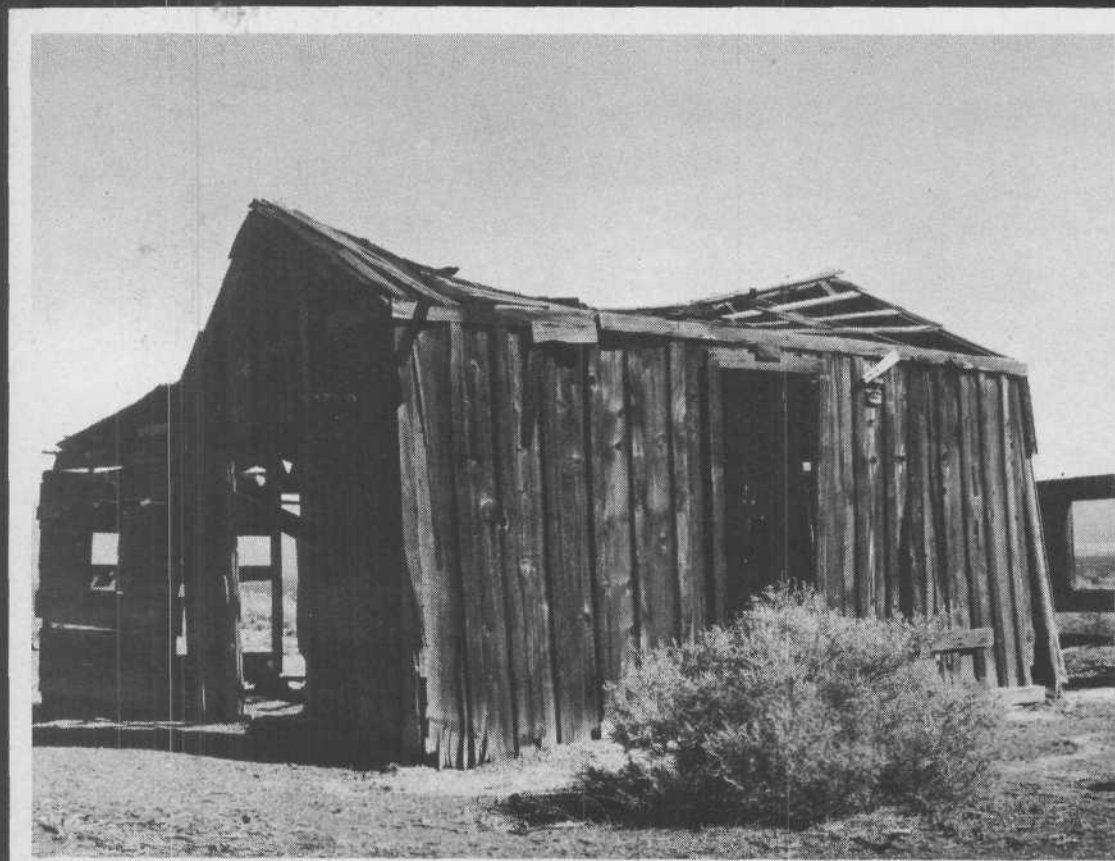
at Red Rock Canyon and at Goler Gulch. It was discovered to the east in the Summit Mountains at Summit Dry Diggings. And, finally, it was discovered in April of 1895, high on Rand Mountain.

The Rand discovery was the largest. There was a gold rush of major proportions which created the mining town of Randsburg. In the summer of 1895, the water needed by the thirsty people of Randsburg came from Cow Wells.

Gold ore is thirsty, too. Water is vital for processing. When Eugene Garlock brought the first stamp mill to the area, in the fall of 1895, he set up his operation at Cow Wells, and the place became known as Garlock.

Eugene Garlock's eight-stamp mill processed ore from the Yellow Aster Mine, the richest in Randsburg, as well as from many other mines in the district. Five other mills were established and Garlock became a real community with its stores, saloons, homes and, in 1898, a post office. The population is said to have reached nearly 500.

The mills at Garlock were the first in the district.



*Sarah "Granny" Slokum's boarding house, once a famous landmark in Garlock, has recently collapsed. "Granny," known for her salty language as well as her generosity, arrived in Garlock in 1914 and bought most of the abandoned town.*



A water tower  
stands today  
as a quiet  
reminder  
that it was  
water that  
was the reason  
for the birth  
of Garlock.  
The relatively  
modern buildings  
shown stand  
near the  
former sites  
of Jennie's Bar  
and the  
Golden Queen  
Mercantile of  
the 1890's.



Even though they were inefficient, and much of the gold stayed in the tailings, they were used. That changed, though, when, in 1898, the Randsburg Railway arrived and ore could be shipped for more thorough processing. The railroad, and later the large stamp mills right at the mines at Randsburg, sounded the death knell for Garlock and the town started her slow downward trek to become another ghost of the Mojave Desert.

**GARLOCK TODAY:** Garlock is not quite a true ghost, but it is very close. Today, only two people call Garlock home. Much of what was Garlock of yesteryear has been de-

stroyed, either by vandals, or by the wind and sun of the desert. Yet, even today, one can find the old saloon that looks as if it were once a bank, as well as a dozen other buildings in various stages of disrepair. Of particular interest is one of the best examples of an arrastra remaining in the desert. The stamp mills are gone, sold for scrap in World War I. Even the tailings have been re-worked, and are also gone. Still, the remnants of Garlock that remain are silent reminders of the Mojave gold rush days of the 1890's when the loud voices of busy men could be heard above the whisper of the desert wind.

# The Real Arizona

THE TRUE STORY BEHIND ONE  
OF THE WEST'S GREATEST  
TREASURE LEGENDS

by JOHN LAWLOR



**T**HE MEXICAN village of La Arizona, Sonora, is in a valley 20 miles southwest of Nogales. It's not far beyond the border of our own state of Arizona and one might assume that's where it got its name.

But precisely the opposite is the case. The state was named after the village.

More than two centuries ago, La Arizona was a mining center on one of the most rugged frontiers of the Spanish empire. In its early years, it was the focal point of a rich silver strike that became immortalized as a legendary lost mine and forever identified the name Arizona with great wealth.

Yet, today, the settlement is all but forgotten and isn't even shown on most maps.

La Arizona was founded in 1730 as *El Pueblo y Real del Arizonac*—the village and mining camp of Arizonac. The name derived from a Pima Indian term mean-

ing "small spring." The Spanish ear soon rejected the harsh final "c," however, and the place was called La Aris-sona or La Arizona in many of the earliest records.

The village was in the Pima country of northern Sonora, where there had been little Spanish colonization. The only other Europeans nearby were a scattering of soldiers and Jesuit priests at Indian missions established in the late 1600's and early 1700's by Father Eusebio Francisco Kino.

It remained a quiet little pueblo until late October 1736, when a Yaqui Indian, named Antonio Siraumea, discovered massive chunks of silver ore in a canyon a few miles to the northeast. He found one piece that weighed 12 arrobas — about 300 pounds!

Prospectors from the village of the small spring rushed to the canyon. Most of them found only small, scattered

specimens of ore but one, Domingo Asmendi, located a 275-pound chunk, almost as big as the Yaqui's. Another, Juan Fermin de Almazan, had the incredibly good luck to unearth a piece that proved to weigh 2500 pounds! The strike quickly became known as the *Planchas de Plata* or *Bolas de Plata*—slabs or balls of silver.

According to contemporary descriptions, the ore was soft and waxy in appearance. That would indicate it was horn silver or, as it's known scientifically, cerargyrite or silver chloride. Spanish authorities were baffled. They weren't familiar with horn silver in a natural state. They knew it as a product of the patio process of silver refining, a technique which involved mixing ore containing argentite or silver sulfide with salt to form silver chloride. The latter was easy to purify further by amalgamation, while silver sulfide was not.





That led to the belief the deposit wasn't a virgin strike at all, but was ore that had already been partly refined by earlier miners, either Spanish or Indian. If so, the silver was a treasure trove, not a mining prospect, and belonged entirely to the King of Spain!

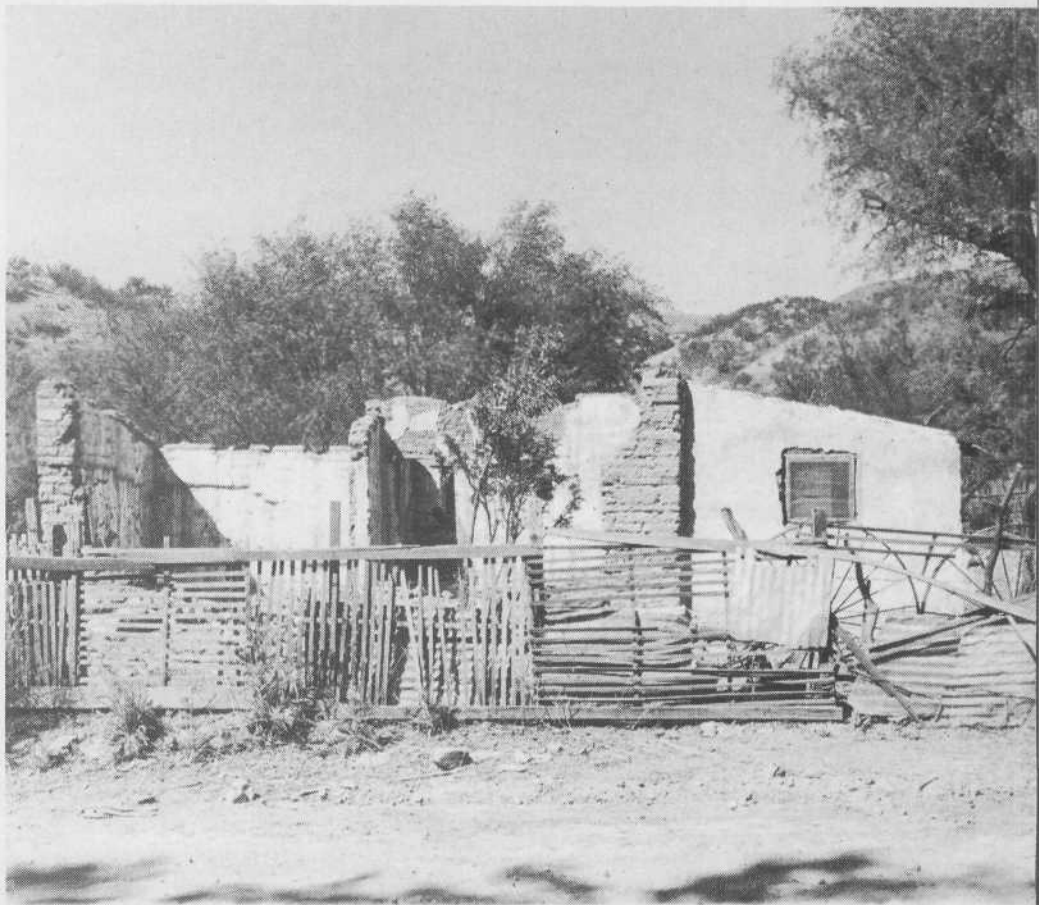
Such a view was strongly supported by Father Jose Toral and other Jesuits at the missions. The priests seemed less concerned with enriching the royal treasury, though, than with preventing the influx of fortune seekers that word of a rich find would attract. They knew a great silver rush would seriously disrupt their efforts to preach among the Indians and convert them to Christianity.

The ranking Spanish official in northern Sonora at the time was Captain Juan Bautista de Anza, commander of the Presidio of Fronteras, whose son and namesake, then less than two years old, would play major roles in the histories of both California and New Mexico.

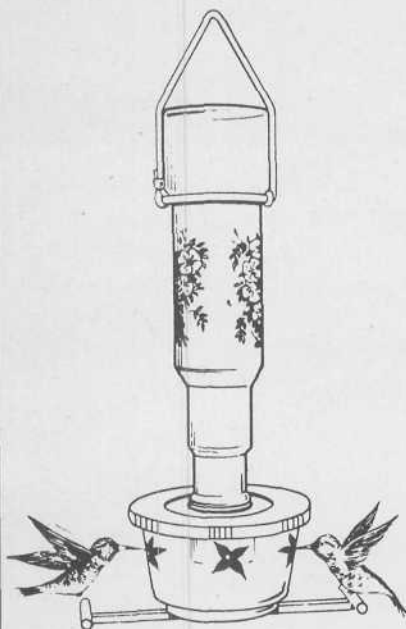
As soon as he learned of the Planchas de Plata, de Anza rode to La Arizona, arriving there in early November 1736. He found the deposit was already petering out. He estimated that over 5,000 pounds of ore had been extracted before his visit to the village. Afterward, though, only another 250 to 300 pounds were found.

Nonetheless, at the urging of the Jesuits, he tried to impound as much of the ore as he could, pending a decision

*Opposite Page: The 19-mile road westward to the historic settlement is graded most of the way. A vehicle with good clearance like this Jeep Commando is useful, but four-wheel-drive isn't necessary. Above: Hidden in the mountains of northern Sonora, southwest of the bordertown of Nogales, is the historic village that gave our Grand Canyon state its name. The little pueblo dates from 1730. Below: This is a 20th Century ruin, not an ancient Spanish structure. Nonetheless, it had to be fenced to protect it from vandals who searched for "treasure" that simply doesn't exist.*



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by higher authorities as to whether it was a treasure or a natural mineral discovery.

The miners of La Arizona were shocked and dismayed. Under the laws of Spain, they expected to pay a 20 percent tax—the so-called royal fifth—on the value of any precious metals they worked, but at least they kept 80 percent. A treasure would be a different matter. There would be a finder's fee, but it could be as little as five percent. And in no case was it likely to be more than 50 percent.

In the face of this, the Yaqui Siraumea filed a petition in January 1737, asking some compensation for discovering the Planchas de Plata in the first place. Eventually, he got back 150 pounds of silver, just 50 percent of his original find.

The ownership of the Planchas was debated in court for more than a year and a half. Finally, in July 1738, Juan Antonio Vizarron y Eguiarreta, Viceroy of Mexico, ruled that the silver was indeed a treasure and, therefore, belonged to the King.

The Viceroy was probably influenced by Father Toral and his fellow priests. For, in addition to serving as the King's personal representative in Mexico, Vizarron y Eguiarreta also happened to be Archbishop of Mexico City. With that responsibility, he would most likely have been sympathetic to the arguments of the Jesuits.

Reports of the controversy and the Viceroy's resolution of it were sent to Spain for the approval of King Philip V. It would be another three years before His Majesty made a statement on the subject. When he did, it was a bombshell. In May 1741, he issued a decree not only affirming his right to the Planchas but claiming as royal property the entire mining district of La Arizona!

The King stated that the Planchas had totalled 4,033 pounds, somewhat less than de Anza's estimate four and a half years earlier. He singled out Domingo Asmendi's 275-pound chunk for particular attention. While proper taxes had been paid on the find, His Majesty argued that, as a great natural curiosity, the ore itself should've been presented to him.

King Philip apparently believed the soft ore was some sort of embryonic form of silver, for he concluded the decree by declaring the area around La Arizona to

*Downstream  
from the  
small spring  
that gave  
La Arizona  
its Indian  
name—  
Arizonac—  
the waters  
form a  
broad lagoon  
used to  
irrigate  
the farms  
that serve  
the modern  
community:*



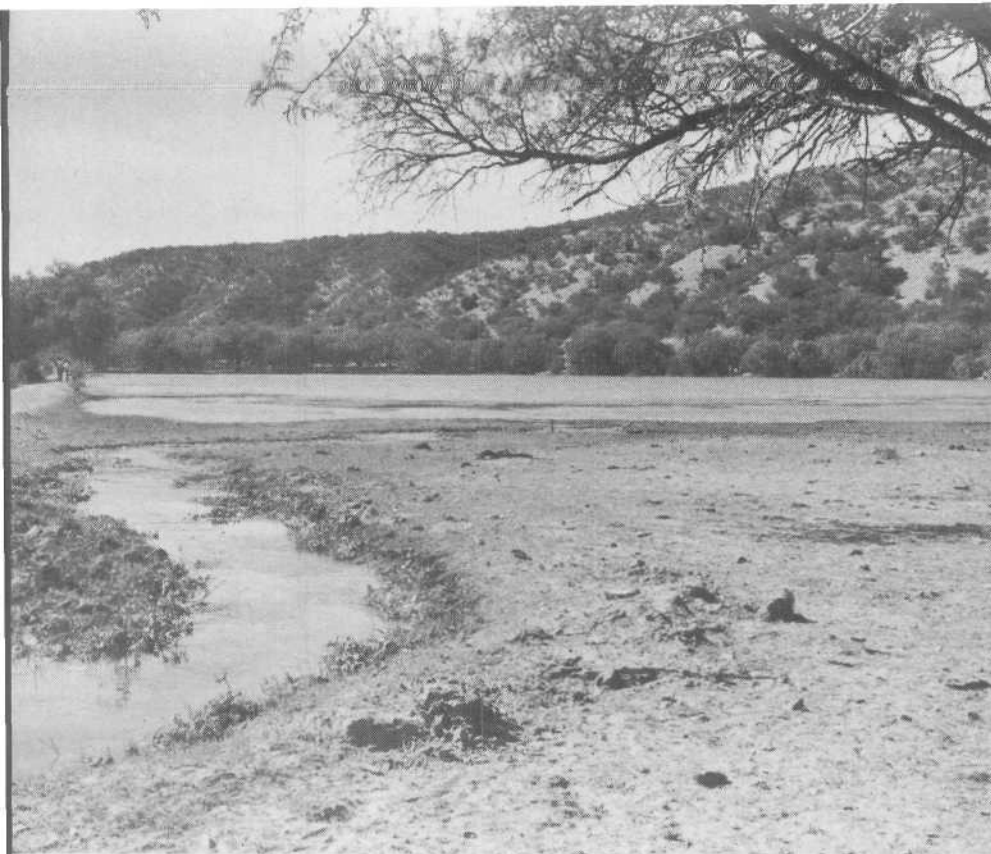
be a *criadero*, or growing place, of the metal and ordered it to be worked on the royal account.

The effects of this decision were disastrous. The King had closed the district to individual prospectors without offering any practical incentive for working its ore deposits as royal property. There was no reason for anyone to remain in the village of the small spring and, soon, it was abandoned. In a few short years it had gone from boom to bust and become one of the earliest mining ghost towns in the West.

If La Arizona had died, the story of its silver lived on. No one seems to have paid attention to de Anza's report that there was hardly anything left of the Planchas deposit only a few weeks after its discovery. To the Spanish and, later, to both Mexicans and Americans as well, the Planchas de Plata became a fabulous lost mine. Indeed, in the frontiersman's imagination, the slabs of silver grew bigger and richer with each retelling of the tale.

In the decades that followed, there were attempts to relocate the Planchas and there may have even been some clandestine mining in the district. However, it wasn't until the 1870's, half a century after the end of Spanish rule in Mexico, that settlers returned to La Arizona. They were attracted by another silver strike, southeast of the original vil-





lage. A mine was established there called the Planchas de Plata, though it wasn't near the true Planchas site. And it never yielded anything like 300- to 2500-pound slabs of ore.

Meanwhile, the legend of La Arizona's great wealth had inspired the adoption of its name for a new American territory to the north. It was a good omen, for the territory and later the state of Arizona would prove exceptionally rich in mineral resources. In time, it would have its own legends of treasure, such as those of the Lost Adams and Lost Dutchman, to rival the story of the Planchas de Plata.

Today, the village of La Arizona is an *ejido*, a cooperative farming community, rather than a mining town. It lies along a stream flowing from the Arizonac—the

small spring itself. At the west end of the settlement is a broad, sandy wash that comes from the Planchas de Plata canyon.

The buildings are fairly recent in origin, though some of them look dilapidated enough to date back to the 1700's! Some barely visible mounds of adobe at a nearby cemetery are the only likely remains of the original *pueblo y real*.

It isn't a very impressive place in appearance. Nonetheless, its people are rightfully proud of its brief yet brilliant moment in history. And, understandably, a resident of La Arizona might not be able to resist reminding occasional visitors from the north that the name of their Grand Canyon state really means "small spring." □

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*The tiny lake  
within the cinder cone.*

# MYSTERIOUS Z

by JOHN SOUTHWORTH

**F**OR MANY centuries, perhaps a millennium, the Indian tribes of what is now New Mexico and Arizona, requiring salt for both domestic and barter needs, have traveled to a mysterious lake in the chapparal highlands not far from the continental divide.

Coronado visited this lake on his trek for the Seven Golden Cities of Cibola and Spanish miners in Mexico hauled its salt a thousand miles to reduce rich ores to silver bullion.

Even today, the Zuni Indians, from the Pueblo of Zuni, make an annual journey wherein, with much ceremony, they take what salt they need for the following year and leave symbolic gifts at the home of their Salt Goddess.

A salt lake in a dry land of alkali flats and uncertain drainage certainly would not be mysterious, but the Zuni Salt Lake is a paradox in a land of surprises. First, it is in a basin or depression on high

ground, almost invisible from the surrounding land and startling to come upon. Water where no water should exist. Then, the lake almost surrounds two small dark cinder cones, a few hundred feet in diameter, which are totally dwarfed by the horizon rim rock around the lake. Finally, the smaller cinder cone has a near-perfect central crater within which a blue jewel of a tiny lake reflects the bright New Mexico sky. A crater within a crater and a lake within a lake. Truly a mysterious spot.

To top it all off, the tiny inner lake makes a wonderful swimming hole when it is warmed by the hot summer sun. Although lifeguards are missing, there is little chance of drowning and absolutely no chance of sinking in water which contains about seven times as much common salt as does ocean water. Before swimming, remember that the nearest shower is far away and you will become a walking salt mine covered with irritating salt crystals difficult to remove without a

large volume of fresh water.

Apparently the inner salt pool is the primary source of brine which passes practically unhindered through the intervening loose volcanic cinders of the mini-crater into the outer lake where, with hot sun and a large surface, the water seasonally evaporates leaving nearly pure salt as a snowy residue. Since about 1938, the salt has been commercially harvested from the lake bottom and from diked crystallizing ponds. Blowing dust and lake bottom material can contaminate the final product which is sold, according to purity, as domestic table salt, highway salt (for winter use on icy surfaces) and stock salt (range cattle licks).

During the height of the production years, there was a post office and school on the shore of the lake. Today, it has one family in a well-constructed stone house, no post office, and school by bus to Quemado, 19 miles to the southeast.

The exact genesis of this fascinating





*Commercial harvesting  
of the salt began  
about 1938.*

# UNI SALT LAKE

salt deposit can only be surmised since little scientific work has been done on the subject. The large crater-like depression at first observation appears to be of volcanic origin, but there is little basalt or lava distributed around the outer surfaces and the inner walls expose only slightly disturbed sedimentary rocks. Surely the basin is not a large low cinder cone and probably it isn't the result of volcanic explosion. Most likely the depression is the result of solution of extensive underlying salt beds in the deep sedimentary formations with subsequent collapse of the overlying material into the solution cavity.

The miniscule amount of volcanic activity which is evident in the area rather indicates that a large disturbed area of broken sediments through which salt water already rose to the surface formed a path of least resistance for a dying stage of volcanism which created two small cinder cones but did not stop the water flow.

Probably the pre-volcanic water flow was many times greater than the present to dissolve and carry away the subterranean mass of salt represented by the volume of the surface depression which is a mile or so across and perhaps 200 feet deep.

St. Johns, on the eastern border of Arizona, is an interesting rural community on the upper Little Colorado River (with good swimming at Lyman Lake to wash off all that salt you bring back) and is the first civilization west of Zuni Salt Lake. Go straight east out of town on an unmarked graded road about 50 miles through open cattle country and little else to a marked intersection with State Route 32 down from Fence Lake, New Mexico. Plan on nearly two hours unless you really make the dirt and rocks fly. Or go northwest on Route 32 from Quemado, New Mexico, on a much shorter, slightly better road (which is also more believable because the road signs actually make mention of a Salt Lake) to the

same marked intersection.

The only entrance into the Zuni Salt Lake depression takes off south and east in a jumble of roads at this intersection. Up over a slight rise just a few yards and what you had about decided was a figment of someone's imagination is at your feet, a total surprise because there is no exterior indication of what lies ahead.

In the winter, the wind and snow blow and there is little evaporation from the surface of the Zuni Salt Lake. In the spring, the wind blows and the tumbleweeds prosper and blow into the lake. In the summer, the hot sun rapidly concentrates the brine in an oven-like stillness. Foreign items in the supersaturated solution serve as nodes for crystallization and come out covered with beautiful halite crystals, the tumbleweeds looking for all the world like crystal chandeliers. The commercial salt harvest is made in late summer and fall.

Pick the season to suit your interests and visit mysterious Zuni Salt Lake. □



**S**EVENTEEN MILES south of Old Mexico's Rock Point (Puerto Penasco), where Sonoran sand dunes slip off right into blue Gulf of California surf, there's a desert derelict aground that's bound to stir most anyone's imagination.

Here's the setting:

You're out back in the sandy wasteland, four-wheeling through a hollow—you haven't seen the sea yet. Round another dune now and from the east, top off at the crest ahead—and, What's this?"

A shipwreck!

You've come upon the 97-ton Eros, a wood-bottomed merchantman now abandoned, weathered, vandalized, almost forlorn.

In 1916, Eros slid from the ways in a Swedish shipyard. Proudly her wooden bow was christened Eros. For centuries, sailing ships attracted such names from Greek mythology; and Eros has meant god of love since the ancient Olympia days. Later, the Romans coined the word, too. To them Eros meant Cupid.

Ironically, Greece and Italy are lands far away from the pleasant Mexican seashore where Eros' seafaring voyages had ended so brusquely and embarrassingly.

Understandably then, this magnetic, deteriorating hulk from far-off Sweden—as would any crumbling adobe stagestop in Arizona, or ruins of a silver mine back in the California mountains—ruffles your curiosity.

You snap all sorts of photographs of Eros. (Only at that point you don't know the vessel's name, her age, weight, maritime purpose, her owner . . . lots of facts like that.)

But, upon leaving Joe's Estuary—Eros' shipwreck haven—you promise yourself: "Try to find out about that grounded vessel."

She's a gem of the sand and surf past from a rustic, neglected point of view. She seems to deserve continued attention.

Our beachcombing group first glimpsed Eros in late April of 1972, some three-and-one-half years after she ran aground in late October of 1968, searching for a snug harbor out of the strong Pacific currents. Even by then, the vessel—flying jib canvas tattered and flapping in the breeze, her riggings afoul, lots of planks loosened and dangling—had her own particular brand of forgotten expression.

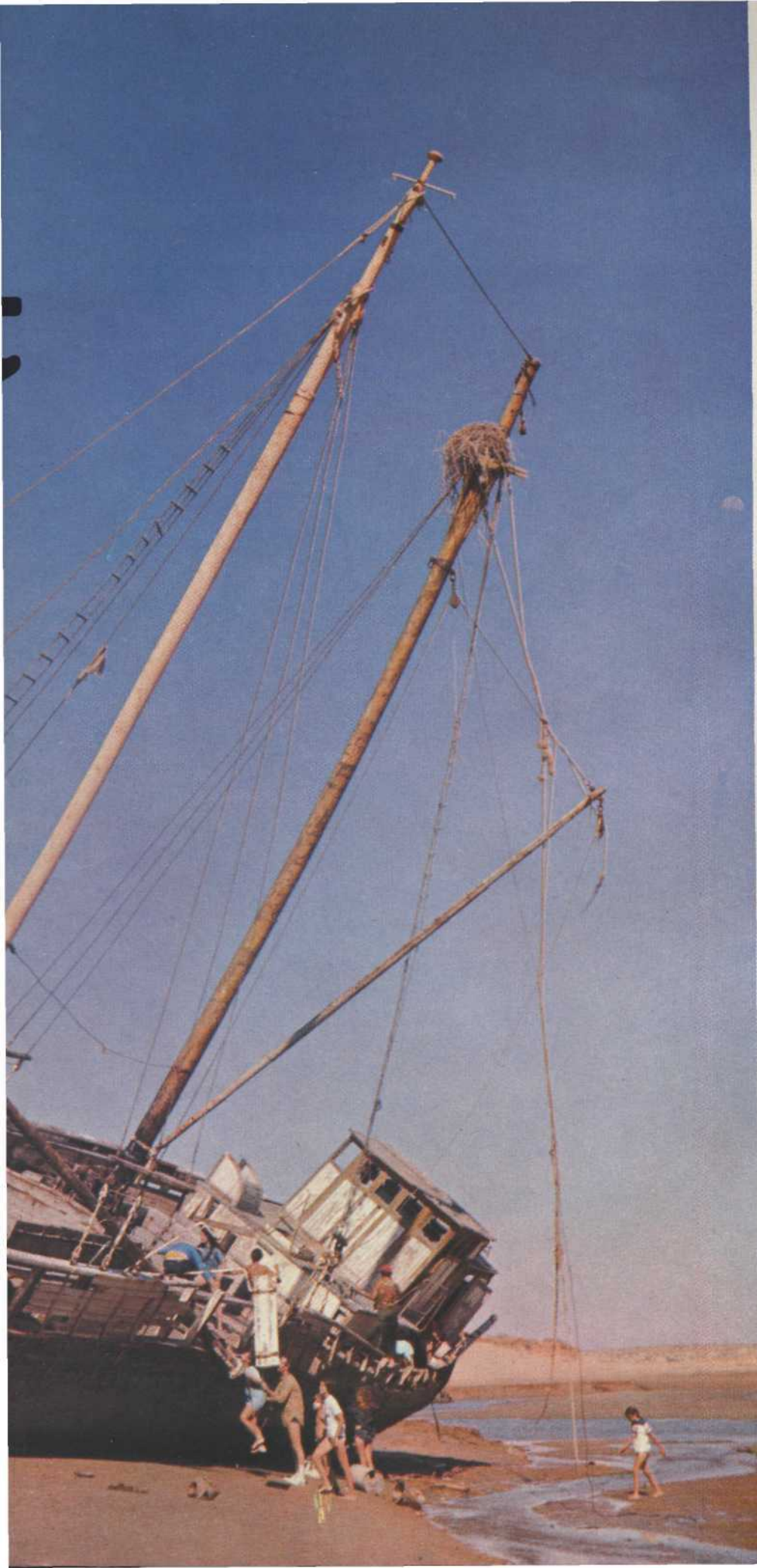
The Eros, laden with 100 tons of diesel

# Desert Derelict

by DAN B. McCARTHY







equipment and parts, drums and drums of lubricants for the machinery, a good cache of champagne for the crew of eight, and one handsome European motorcycle, had cast off from Sweden in 1966.

Captain and owner then was Carl Henrik Ludwigs. During two years outbound from Sweden and prior to beaching in Mexico, the Eros had:

1. Her propeller entangled in a Japanese fishing net out in the Atlantic Ocean which took a diver 18 hours to free.

2. Erred in navigation, some 150 miles off course near the Canary Islands before the correction was made.

3. Sprung some serious leaks while sailing toward the Panama Canal; spent two months in the Zone getting repairs.

4. Seen five of the eight crewmen leave the ship at Mazatlan.

Settled in the sand now, we circled her and such Eros emergencies as stormy seas, leaking holds, and empty food lockers the last week of sailing toward Rocky Point, seemed so remote from the peace and calm of her abject desolation.

The report goes that Eros wouldn't be atilt today, listing badly to port side, if the captain hadn't placed full faith in a Mexican pilot, hired to direct the Eros safely into the estuary. No soundings were taken. Eros ran aground.

Mexican maritime authorities allow an owner of such a distressed ship 90 days to free the vessel. If not, Mexico claims ship and cargo under the nation's abandoned or shipwrecked vessel clauses.

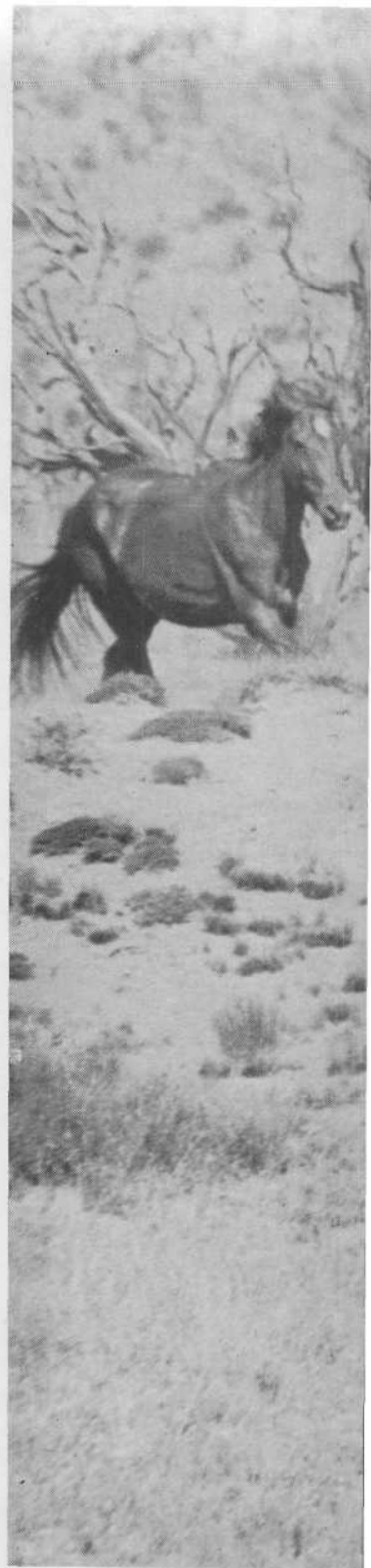
Ludwigs and aides attempted to lighten the Eros by removing as much cargo as possible. Hopefully, one of the three monthly high tides due would successfully refloat the wooden-bottomed merchantman. No luck. Eros held fast to the shoreline floor. Time and high tide had run out.

Gradually, the ship disappears. Between the time the accompanying picture was taken and late summer of 1974, the twin masts had vanished, along with the riggings. More planking is loose, pointing askew.

At rest now, though forsaken, Eros still tugs the heartstrings, elicits a few faster flutters to the beat. You come up over a sand dune and the old merchantman seems to be straining doggedly to keep from keeling over entirely to port.

Eros, the desert derelict, doing yeoman duty in that holding action! □

# Roundup for Desert Mustangs



by **BUDDY MAYS**

**I**MAGINE, IF you will, a 23,000-acre section of high, desert mesa country in southern New Mexico, filled with little more than rattlesnakes and prickly-

pear cactus. Now and then, a traveler might come upon a tiny, cool spring, bubbling up from beneath a rock, but mostly the land is dry and arid, burned to a chocolate brown by the 100 degree-plus desert sun.

Then, visualize a cowhand who straps





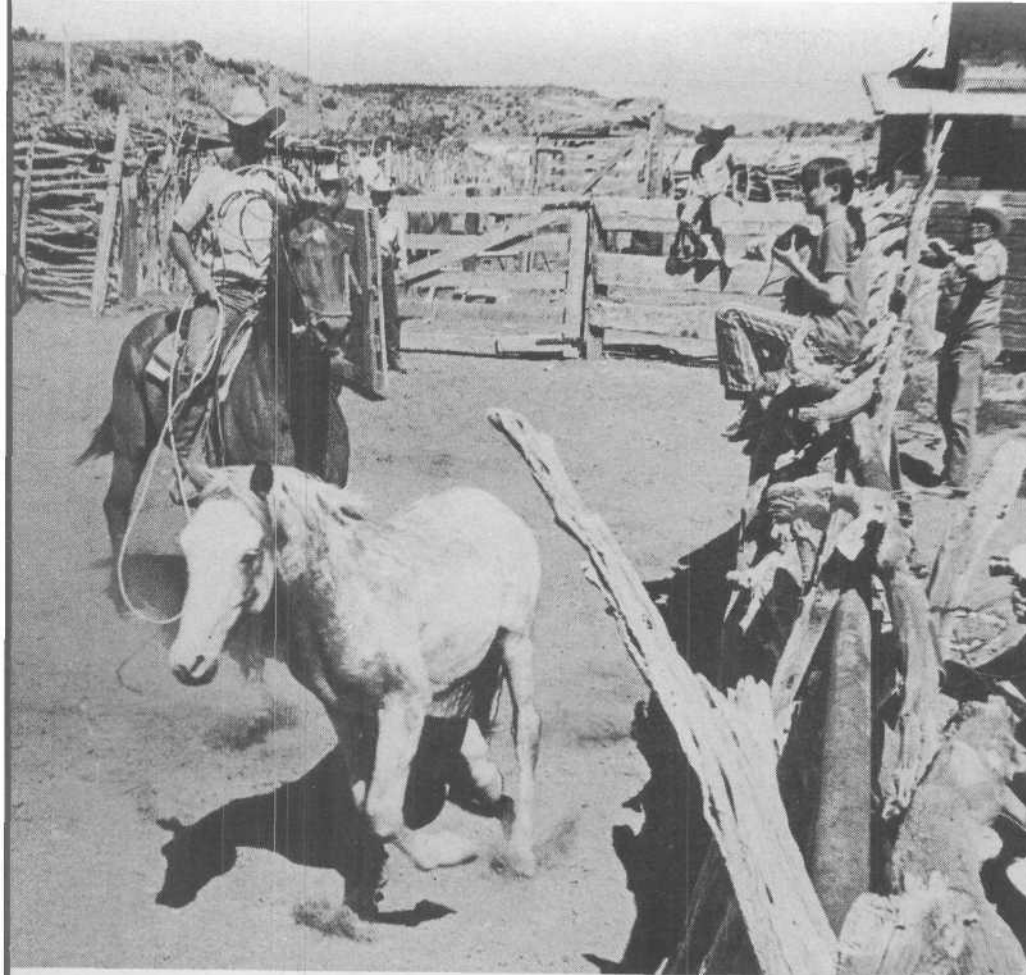
on his spurs, coils his lariat and heads toward his pick-up loaded down with horse, saddle and lots of water in round, gallon-size canteens.

Finally, imagine a tiny dust cloud somewhere in those 23,000 acres. Caught by a desert wind, the dust cloud disappears for a moment, then grows larger. Then, from beneath the dust, manes and tails whipping in the breeze and unshod hooves throwing sparks of

friction-fire into the sand, come a herd of horses—wild horses running as if the devil were on their heels. Then, only a few paces behind the herd, the devil shows himself in the form of a huge, spotted stallion, ears flattened and teeth nipping at the flanks of the horses in front of him. This way and that, he turns the herd, keeping them on an invisible trail that only he knows. Few men have seen the stallion—fewer yet have ever

walked in his domain.

If you can create a picture similar to that just described in your mind, then you've just set the scene for what has to be one of the Southwest's most exciting events . . . a wild horse round-up. Once each year, on the sprawling McKinley Ranch, in southern New Mexico, cowboys load their cowponies into the back of four-wheel-drive pick-ups and head for Lucero Mesa, a badland-like expanse



*Above: Weldon McKinley gets ready to rope one of his wild mustangs. Below: The Medicine Hat stallion—spirit horse to the Comanche.*



of desert 40 miles east of the dusty little town of Belen. This small portion of New Mexico is called home by a herd of Spanish Barb Mustangs, descendants of the original "Mestenos" which came to the United States in the closing years of the 16th century.

The cowboys who take part in the round-up are led by ranch owner, Weldon McKinley, a man who considers the herd not only a part of his ranch but also a part of his family. McKinley acquired Lucero Mesa and the horse herd in 1958. Instantly, he fell in love with both the land and the Mustangs. Consequently, once each year, he and his cowboys round up the herd to make sure they haven't been injured during the long desert winter. This is a chore he dearly loves.

There aren't many Mustangs left on Lucero Mesa—only about 25 at last count. Although the animals are protected not only by the solitude of their desert home, but also by the watchful eyes of the McKinley Ranch, some of the horses are taken by predators, others fall to sickness and snakebite. Nevertheless, the Mustangs seem to be holding their own, foaling several colts each year and staying in country where many men would not care to venture. This fact makes the yearly round-up more than just a horseback ride in the desert.

After two hours of difficult driving over dusty, rut-filled roads, McKinley and his men finally reach the Lucero Mesa area. Unloading and saddling their grain-fed, domestic horses is only the first chore. The men must now make sure their cowponies are in top condition—if a horse went lame in the "badlands," it would probably mean a 20-mile walk in temperatures as high as 100 degrees for its rider. They must make sure they have plenty of water since springs are few and far between on the mesa. Necessary, too, is first aid kit, food, poncho, and all the other equipment needed for a ride into wilderness.

When everything is ready, when each little detail has been checked and double checked, the real problem begins—finding the Mustangs. A hundred different side canyons wind through the mesa country and the wild horses could be in any of them.

McKinley and his men spread out over the desert, each taking a different direction. Round-up time isn't a new game



*The herd  
of mustangs  
are driven  
into the  
corrals  
to be checked  
and then  
released.*



with the Mustangs—McKinley has been chasing them for 15 years—but the horses never allow themselves to just be led to the corral. The herd leader, and sire of all the foals, is a "Medicine Hat" stallion—a spotted, streamlined beauty with brown ears and black eyes, thought to be a spirit horse by the Comanche. A talisman of living flesh and as sacred to the Comanche as India's cows, the Medicine Hat knows every nook, cranny, and rattlesnake hole on his 23,000-acre home.

After three or four hours of hard riding, searching every hole in the badlands, one of the McKinley riders, usually by luck, will finally spot the herd. Then the fun begins.

Lariats whirling, domestic horseflesh lathering to the point of exhaustion, the cowboys attempt to maneuver the Mustangs toward a set of wood and wire corrals erected just for the purpose of containing wild horses. This is no easy task when the horses don't want to go.

As the day progresses, the round-up usually develops into a contest of wits between Weldon McKinley and the Medicine Hat stud. If the stallion turns the herd into a red-walled side canyon, in an attempt to escape to the high country, McKinley's experience and forethought has usually placed a cowhand

there to turn them back out again. Similarly, riders keep the herd away from the few waterholes on Lucero Mesa in an attempt to dry them out. Once, in the earlier days of the round-up, a McKinley cowboy tried to run the Mustangs until they gave up in exhaustion. That cowhand's horse died beneath him, his heart literally exploded by over-work. Since then, McKinley has used brains instead of brawn to corral the Mustangs, saving his horses as well as his men.

Finally, sometime in the late afternoon or early evening, the great, spotted Medicine Hat stallion decides he and his mares have had enough, and allows the herd to be driven into the corrals. There they are counted, checked for injuries and snakebite, and admired by the crowd of press and local horse lovers who have driven 40 miles of bad road to witness the round-up. One or two of the animals will be roped and gentled by cowboys and, in very rare circumstances, a young Mustang will be sold to a breeder. Whoever the lucky buyer might be, he knows that before he ever gets his hands on the horse, his background has been closely scrutinized by McKinley. One incident of misconduct where any horse is concerned, and the man would not have been allowed on the ranch, let alone to buy a Mustang.

Then, just as the sun sets down over the cactus-covered desert, the gates to the corrals are opened and Weldon McKinley says goodbye to his Mustangs for another year. Manes and tails flying, hooves pounding the dusty desert floor, the Mustangs flee the corrals at a gallop.

"I'm not a man who cries," says McKinley as the horses disappear into the dusk, "but everytime I see those animals, I want to break into tears. They're just too damn pretty for words!"

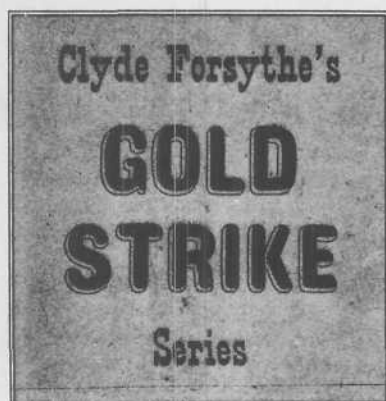
Not too many years ago, wild horses by the thousands covered the Western United States from Oklahoma to the Oregon Cascades. Many of these were true Spanish Barb Mustangs which, during the late 1500's, had filtered up from Mexico across the Staked Plains of Texas. Old documents lead us to believe that the Mustangs originally escaped from great Mexican haciendas. Before that, they had been brought to Mexico from Spain.

In 1598, more Mustangs were brought into the United States by a Spanish explorer named Coronado, who at the time was searching for mythical cities of gold. Coronado didn't find the riches he desired, but when he left, many of his tough, spirited Spanish Barbs remained, either in the hands of Indians or Spanish

*continued*

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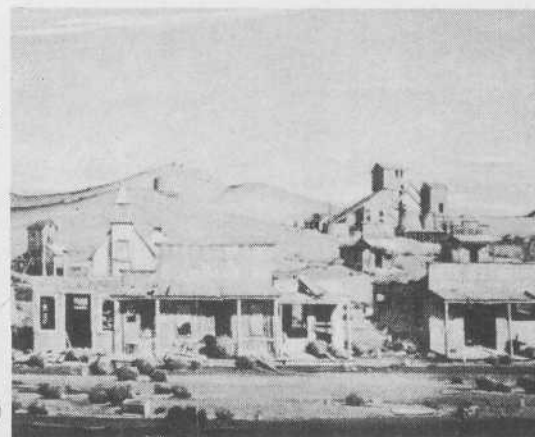
The Gold Rush



The Mining Camp



The Mining Town



The Ghost Town

soldiers who had elected to stay in the Southwest.

Soon after Coronado left, Spanish ranchers began moving into the area of what is now New Mexico. Both the earlier Mexican horses and Coronado's Mustangs were allowed to reproduce, furnishing field and farm animals for the great haciendas built by the ranchers.

Then, in 1680, the Pueblo Indians, who had been no more than slaves to the ranchers, rose up in a bloody war and drove the Spanish from the Southwest. The ranchers left, but the Mustangs remained, soon to become wild since no one was left to care for them.

In the 100 years that followed, the horses multiplied so quickly that tens of thousands soon roamed the West. Only the Horse Indians, Apache, Comanche, Sioux and Cheyenne, ever bothered with the animals, and they could do little to affect the numbers of the great herds.

In the middle 1800's, though, the cattlemen became the deciding factor in the fate of the wild horses. Complaining that the Mustangs were ruining grazing lands, the ranchers hired a special breed of killer, called a "Mustanger," to rid the rangelands of the wild horse. The Mustangers went about their task with a will, decimating the herds and leaving most of the dead animals to rot in the sun.

In 1934, the final blow was dealt to the Mustangs in the form of the Taylor Grazing Act. This act allowed ranchers to fence their property if they so desired, and suddenly the few Mustangs left were no longer free. What herds had escaped the Mustangers were fenced in, captured and sold to glue factories, or broken and trained by the ranchers' children.

The day of the wild horse has come to an end in the United States. A few isolated herds, here and there, still wander on western pastures, most protected by law, but even so, many die at the hands of poachers or angry ranchers who still feel that they ruin grazing land.

The Spanish Barbs of Lucero Mesa, though, under the loving care and protection of Weldon McKinley, do not have to worry about poachers or angry ranchers. Their only concern, besides dodging rattlesnakes and mountain lions and finding a drinkable waterhole, is to figure out how to "outhorse" the horsemen in next year's round-up. □

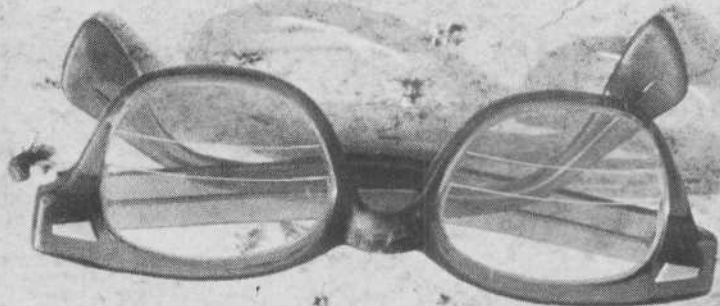


1. Bobcat tracks. In walking, the claws of all felines are involuntarily retracted [the better to stay sharp!].

2. Coyote tracks. Photo shows imprints of claws, as in all canines. Coyotes set all feet in straight line.

3. Mountain lion tracks. Again, in cat fashion, the claws are retracted in walking, leaving no imprint.

All photos were taken at Willow Hole—a favorite animal watering place near Desert Hot Springs, California.



3

2

1

Be a desert detective! Figure out, if you can, what species of desert predators made the tracks in these photos. One correct answer marks you as a desert novice; two correct answers indicate that you're a desert enthusiast; three correct answers designate you as a bona-fide desert rat!

[Turn page upside down for answers.]

by Hans Baerwald

**Desert Life**

# The Wonderland

**T**HE CHIRICAHUA Mountains, in the extreme southeastern corner of Arizona, are an oasis in a flatland of grass; an ever-rising sea of grass that gives no advance information about the hidden world of the Chiricahuas as the visitor approaches the entrance to Chiricahua National Monument at Bonito Canyon.

This mountain range, with secret hidden trails, deep canyons, forested sides, shady glens and strange massive rock formations, turrets, spires, and balanced rocks that defy gravity, is historically rich in all phases of man and his occupation and passage through the verdant forests of this "Wonderland of Rocks."

Within the generation of our immediate forebears, these mountains were known as the homeland of the Chiricahuas Apache Indians. Apache Pass, at the north edge of the range, was a natural route from the Rio Grand country to Tucson and California.

The Butterfield Mail Stages established regular runs through Apache Pass from St. Louis to the west coast, and were bitterly resented and attacked many times by Apache warriors.

Students of American history are well acquainted with the almost legendary Chief Cochise and his warriors of the Chiricahuas Apache Indians. They held the white man at bay for 25 years in a futile attempt to halt the advance west into their homeland and across the Chiricahua Range and the Dragoon Mountains a few miles west.

After the establishment of Fort Bowie near Apache Pass in 1862, open warfare, with ambush and massacre, were practiced on both sides until the final surren-

der of Geronimo in 1886. The fierce Apache had been subdued by the determined white men, but the exploits of some of their leaders are remembered as one looks out over Massai Point and Cochise Head which immortalizes two famous Apache chiefs.

A section of the Chiricahuas was created a National Monument on April 18, 1924 by President Calvin Coolidge. Entrance to the Monument is on the west side, from Willcox. Off Interstate 10, take State Highway 186 south, or via U.S. 666 then State 181, from Douglas, Arizona. Facilities include a 37-unit campground in Bonito Canyon where the elevation is 5,340 feet, one-half mile from the Monument Headquarters. Drinking water, fireplaces and tables are provided. Fireplaces burn charcoal, so bring your own.

The campgrounds are maintained in a clean and sanitary manner, and spaces are well placed among trees which create a pleasant setting. Trailers up to 22 feet can be accommodated, but no hook-ups are available. The Monument is open all year. Mean daily temperatures around 40 degrees in January, and 74 degrees in July are ideal for comfortable relaxing.

Also, the mild winters and cool summer days are perfect for exploring the many maintained trails throughout the Monument for a truly rewarding visit with a most unusual land. Trail guide maps, available at Monument Headquarters, list time and distance. The trails are not difficult and extremely interesting.

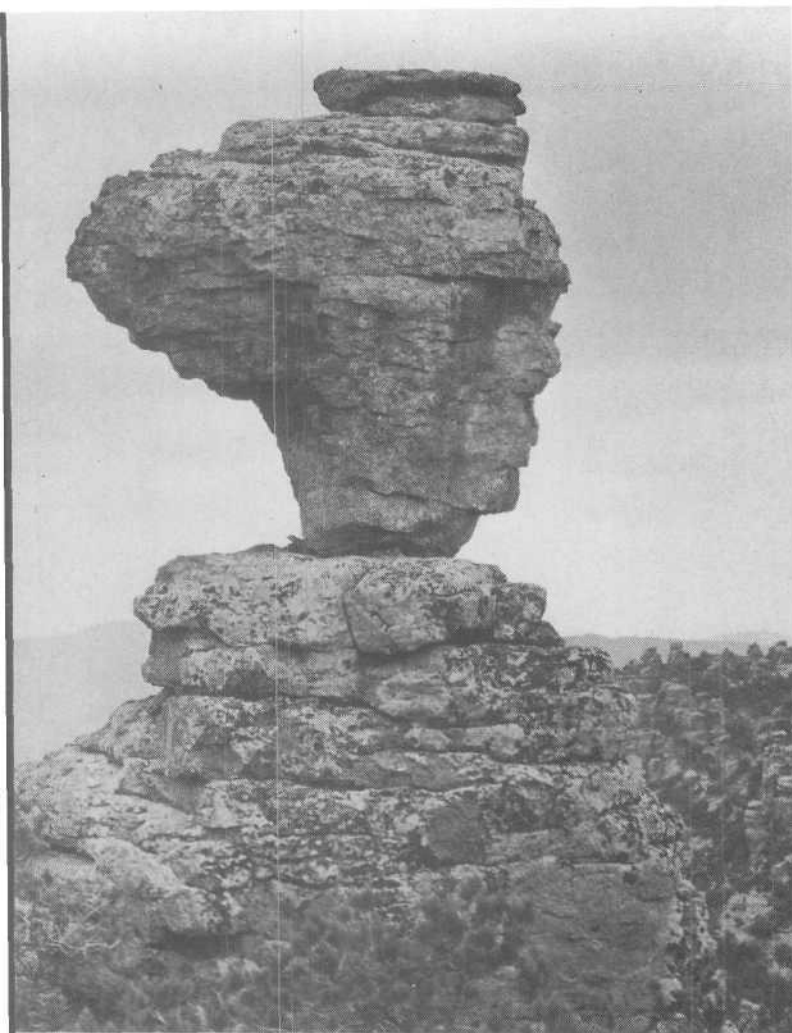
The first feature the visitor will notice is the fantastic array of rock formations consisting of spires, pinnacles and



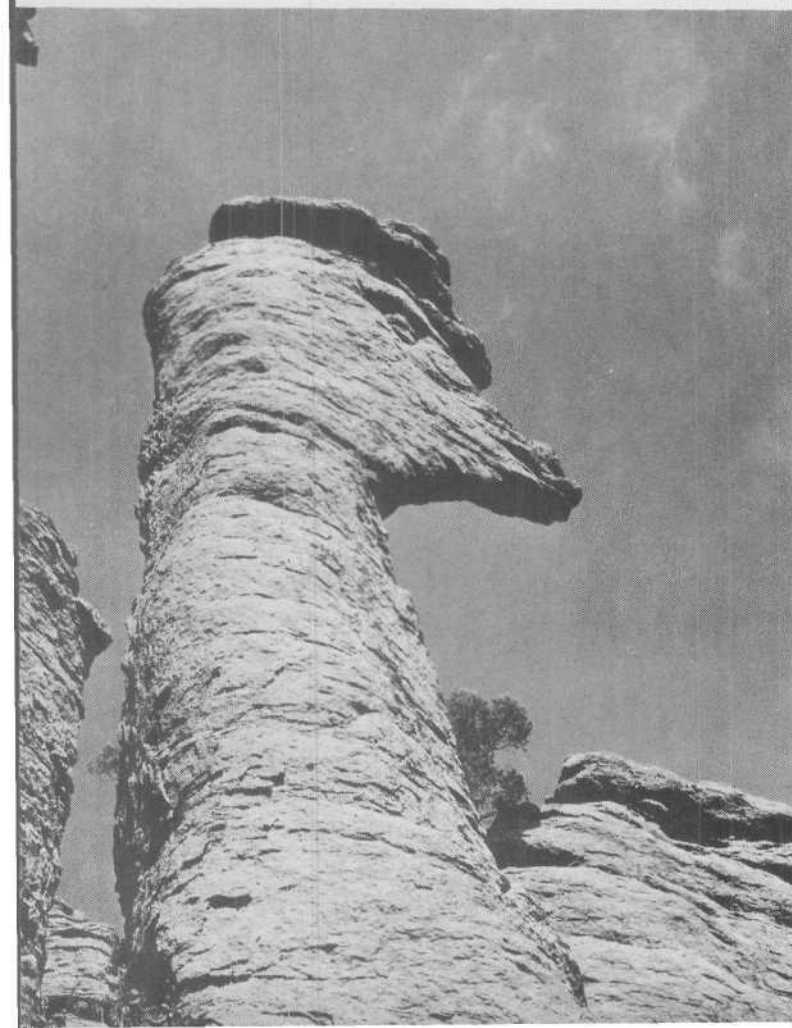
# of Rocks

by ENID C. HOWARD





*"Old Maid."*  
With her  
snub nose  
and receding  
chin, the  
old maid has more  
that her  
share of weight  
in her  
"hair-do."  
She was  
sculptured  
largely  
by the wind  
after the lava  
of which  
she is made  
cooled and cracked.



*Donald the Duck,*  
is perched  
high above  
the canyon  
trail, looking  
fierce and  
quarrelsome.  
Photos by  
Joseph Muench.

imagined figures of people or animals. The rock surfaces are literally clothed in lichens of every hue; yellow, blue, grey, green. They coat the surfaces of the columns and create a softening glow to the formations.

The geological forces, which created this "Wonderland of Rocks," are of volcanic origin. Strangest of all is the volcano, that produced the white hot ash which became the singular, and sometimes quaint or comical formations, was located 10 miles distant. It took geologists several years to locate the source of the volcanic deposit that had been laid down intermittently.

Finally, when the eruptions ceased, water deposits, uplifting, erosion, rain and wind began the cutting and wearing away of upper strata. Erosion is still working at the softer layers of the tuff, while the harder layers of breccia and agglomerate, and a massive 800-foot-thick rhyolite lava deposit resist the cutting action and stand tall in pinnacles that astound us with their form and variety.

Lush green forests dominate the steep sides of the west and north exposures within the Monument. Life zones overlap because of the extremes in altitude, and results in a mixing of biotic communities that ordinarily would be separate. Two distinct biotic situations and a portion of a third are found here; the desert grasslands of the extreme upper edge of the Lower Sonoran Zone, the chaparral community of the Upper Sonoran Zone, which extends its full range in Bonito Canyon, and the forest community of the Transition Life Zone which tops out at Sugarloaf Peak, the Monument's highest point at 7,308 feet.

Because of this unusual span of biotic communities, a wealth of deciduous and evergreen trees, shrubs, chaparral, flowers, cacti, and incredible numbers of birds and animals thrive at altitudes and in situations where they have no business to be living. However, there is an orderly sequence to the plan because of what is called micro-climates, where the zones overlap to create a biotic potential, and where flora or fauna can live well in both zones.

The Chiricahua Mountains are a bird watcher's heaven as more than 250 species and sub-species have been recorded, with about 100 of them sighted within the Monument boundaries. They





Chiricahua National Monument is a "Wonderland of Rocks," that leads the visitor to explore the good walking trails into the heart of this verdant forest. This is the ancient homeland of the Apache Indians who, under the leadership of Chief Cochise, fought so valiantly to retain their land and their freedom from the laws of the white man. This formation along the scenic drive is called, "The Organ Pipes." Photo by the Author.

range from the ground floor occupants to those who will live only on the topmost cliffs. Sightings have been made of some of the exotic birds of Mexico who have extended their summer range into Arizona where the living accommodations seem more to their taste. One of these is the Trogon whose long, copper-colored tail is indeed spectacular and identifies him immediately.

A paved road to Massai Point presents an immense panorama of the colorful pinnacles which are the outstanding feature of the area. One may walk the paths around the point where extensive views to the west across Sulphur Spring Valley, and the San Simon Valley on the east, unfold against a far out horizon.

The varied life zones of the Chiricahuas shelter an amazing number of animals and it is a lucky visitor who is privileged to see some of these natives. The bannertail kangaroo rat is one of

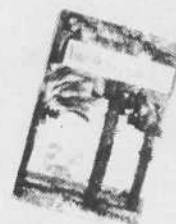
three species of kangaroo rats found here, along with the desert cottontail, the high-jumping blacktail jackrabbit, whitetail deer, the gray fox, racoons and bobcats.

Occasional visitors from across the border are the ocelot, who are spotted and about twice the size of a house cat, and the jaguar, also spotted but as large or heavier than a mountain lion. A Mexican resident who has definitely migrated to the Chiricahuas is the noisy, blatantly hungry Coati. He is also a very gregarious fellow and hangs around the campgrounds, posing for pictures and snooping for food. His appearance is awkwardly unbalanced with a long heavy tail making up most of his length.

Great pictures are everywhere, around every bend in the road or turn on the trail, so don't forget your camera when you visit "The Wonderland of Rocks" in southeastern Arizona! □

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# The Case of the Bones of the Bones in Stone

by F. A. BARNES



**T**HE MINI-BUS pulled off of the road into an area where bulldozers had removed tons of vegetation, sand and rock to leave a fairly flat, open area in the broken pinion-juniper desertland.

As the vehicle pulled to a stop in the 'dozed area, several passengers stepped out eagerly. This was a special rock-hounding tour, and this was prime rock-hounding country.

Within seconds after he had stepped out, too, Lin Ottinger, the tour guide, stooped to pick up something, then called out to the others.

"Hey! This is what you're looking for here."

He held a marble-sized sandy sphere in his hand. But the tiny ball was not sandy colored, it was a bright azure blue.

"Azurite balls! Here's another one!"

The hunt was on. The group scattered out across the flat area of almost colorless, decomposing sandstone, looking for little spheres of blue azurite, happy as kids at a picnic. The bulldozed land belonged to a mining company that had operations nearby, but Ottinger had obtained permission to bring rockhound tours to this special place where azurite balls were plentiful.

The search went on, and the curious blue spheres were found by the handful. Other bits of unusual rock were occasionally brought to the guide for identification. He quickly identified most speci-



mens as fairly common local minerals. Then a collector, a woman, handed Lin a different type of specimen, a brown-stained tooth, asking him what animal it came from. He felt he knew at a glance,



*Left: This is the discovery site, where human bones were found in place in rock strata over 100 million years old. As a University of Utah anthropologist, aided by discovered Lin Ottinger, uncovers the bones, the crew of a television nature-series captures the event on movie film. Right: At this stage, the remains of two distinct skeletons are revealed. Both are missing their upper halves which were scraped away by the bulldozer that removed some 15 feet of earth and solid rock that was once above the bones. One body was evidently in a squatting but upright position, while the other was on its side but doubled up.*



*This close-up of the mystery bones, with the knife, trowel and brush used to uncover them, shows the human remains as they were finally revealed. The leg and hip bones in one skeleton were still articulated, indicating that the bodies were intact when buried somehow in a rock layer over 100 million years old. The dark stains of organic decay around the bones support this idea.*

ish stains that decaying organic matter leaves in sand.

Within minutes, several more teeth and a number of pieces of bone were found. Some of the bone was obviously from a human skull or jawbone.

Then someone found a trace of telltale brown in the white semi-rock sand. Lin quickly went to the spot and started carefully removing the decomposing sandstone from around the dark stain. After a few minutes of careful, almost surgical excavating with his knifeblade, Lin paused. A smoothly rounded object was appearing in the center of the discolored area.

Bone! Yes, there was still whole bone left in the semi-rock, bone that had acquired a greenish tinge from the copper minerals in the sandstone. Azurite balls are a blue "cupric" form of copper compound, but the mild, complex acids released by organic decay can produce "cuprous" copper compounds. These are green.

Lin stopped digging. If this was what he suspected, it could have considerable scientific value. Bones, apparently in place, "in situ," in ancient rock strata, could mean a new species of prehistoric animal. Lin had found such before. But human bones in place within rock would be even more unusual, a seeming contradiction of all currently held scientific theories about the age of mankind.

but pulled out a magnifying lens to make sure.

Yes, it was a human tooth!

With a shout, Lin called his group of scattered rockhounds together, told

them what to look for, then joined them as they set about a careful, coordinated search of the bulldozed area, watching this time for more human teeth, bits of bone fragments and, maybe, the brown-



*Carefully, patiently, Dr. Marwitt uncovered the bones found by Lin Ottinger while guiding a rockhound group in search for azurite specimens. Two doubled up legs and a pelvic bone have appeared at this stage of the excavation. The first bone of a second skeleton is visible near Dr. Marwitt's left hand.*

Human bones "in situ" in a rock formation had to be as old as the rock they were in, yet even the "newest" rock is far older than scientists thought the human race could possibly be.

Knowing full well the possible value of the find, Lin carefully covered the exposed bone end with wetted paper to protect it from exposure to the desert air and sun, then covered the paper with loose sand.

Then he explained the situation to the puzzled group. He ended his explanation by pointing out that only an accredited scientist could establish that the bones were, indeed, human and that they were "in situ" within the rock. And if the answers to both of these questions were affirmative, then only the scientific community had a chance of finding an explanation for human bones within rock strata millions of years old.

This was the beginning of a mystery story, one more of the countless mysteries that have come to light within the great Southwestern deserts of North

America. And one whose solution, like so many others, may never be found.

The next chapter of this story occurred about a week later, when a scientist from the University of Utah arrived in Moab to visit the discovery site. Lin Ottinger had notified Dr. W. Lee Stokes, with whom he had worked on previous paleontological finds, and Dr. Stokes had referred the matter to Dr. J. P. Marwitt, a professor of anthropology at the University of Utah in Salt Lake City.

A natural history television photography team, a local news reporter and several other interested people accompanied Lin and Dr. Marwitt to the site, which was located in a remote desert valley some 35 miles to the southeast of the remote Utah community of Moab.

Once there, Dr. Marwitt immediately set to work on Lin's concealed find, carefully scraping the surrounding material from the discolored bone! The material was neither hard sandstone nor loose sand, but somewhere in between, a kind of semi-rock that forms when loose sand

bonds together in the presence of moisture over a long period of time. The resulting "semi-rock" was too hard to penetrate with bare fingers, yet scraped away readily enough with the knife blades and pointed trowels being used for the delicate excavation.

The small group watched intently as the excavation progressed. Movies and still photographs were taken for the record at various stages, and excitement grew as more and more bones were uncovered, bones that were obviously still articulated, or joined together in a natural configuration.

After several hours of painstaking work, Dr. Marwitt stopped his meticulous efforts and settled back to study what he had uncovered. By then, officials of the nearby copper mine were on hand. Dr. Marwitt questioned them closely about the nature of the terrain that had been 'dozed away from above the partial human skeletons now exposed.

Then the anthropologist summarized the clues to the mystery that had come to light in this desolate desert valley.

The bones were obviously human and "in situ," that is, in place and not washed or fallen into the stratum where they rested from higher, younger strata. The portions of the two skeletons that were exposed were still articulated, indicating that the bodies were still intact when buried or covered.

Further, the bones were stained a bright green by the copper salts that occur in the vicinity, and some of the bright blue azurite balls that were found in and around the bones were partially turned green by reaction with the organic material of the bodies. In addition, the dark organic stains found around the bones indicated that the bones had been complete bodies when deposited in the ancient sandstone.

There was some question as to the exact geological formation in which the bones were found. Mine metallurgist Keith Barrett, of the Big Indian Copper Mine that owned the discovery site, recalled that the rock and sandy soil that had been removed by 'dozer from above the bones had been solid, with no visible caves or crevices. He also remembered that at least 15 feet of material had been removed, including five or six feet of solid rock. This provided strong, but not conclusive, evidence that the remains



were as old as the stratum in which they were found.

And that stratum was at least 100 million years old. Due to considerable local faulting and shifting, the site could either be in the lower Dakota or the still older upper Morrison formation.

Dr. Marwitt pointed out several curious aspects of the discovery. While one body seemed to be in the doubled-up position sometimes used by ancient Indian tribes for formal burials, the other was not. Both upper bodies were missing, most probably carried away by the bulldozer that had removed the overburden during earlier routine mine development work.

This conjecture was verified by the many scattered teeth, skull fragments and other pieces of bone found lying around loose in the vicinity. Some of these had been picked up on the day of the discovery. Others had been just found, by the process of screening much of the loose sand near the undisturbed parts of the skeletons.

But, even though the bones were in place in rock over 100 million years old, they appeared to be relatively modern in configuration, that is, *Homo sapiens* rather than one of his ancient, half-animal predecessors.

This was not the only contradiction in the find. Even though the rock and soil layers originally above the bones were continuous and unbroken as claimed by the mine officials, there was still the possibility that there once may have been some kind of a natural or excavated opening that allowed the original owners of the mystery bones to go deep below the surface.

Further, the greenish tinge to the azurite balls next to the bones indicated that they, and the sand in which they formed, were much older than the bones. The anthropologist found this, and copper-green hue of the bones, to be most unusual. He had never seen this phenomenon before.

There seemed to be only one way to resolve the mystery posed by the green human bones in rock over 100 megayears old. Present scientific theories hold that the human race is no more than two or three million years old, and even this depends upon defining "human" in a rather loose manner.

But laboratory age-dating could determine the true age of the bones with fair

*In addition to the bones still in place at the discovery site, these fragments and teeth were found scattered around, doubtless by the 'dozer that uncovered the site during mine development. Lin Ottinger, shown here holding two upper jaw fragments together, still has the mystery bones.*

*For some reason, University of Utah scientists never got around to age-dating the bones, even though such dating might have solved at least part of the mystery of human bones within geological strata over 100 million years old.*



accuracy. Therefore, once the bones had been thoroughly photographed and studied in their original position, Dr. Marwitt carefully removed them for transport to the university laboratories. He also took with him the loose bone fragments and teeth found in the vicinity.

There the matter rested for some time. And there the matter still rests. Somehow, the university scientists never got around to age-dating the mystery bones. Dr. Marwitt seemed to lose interest in the matter, then transferred to an eastern university. No one else took over the investigation. Lin Ottinger, growing tired of waiting after more than a year, reclaimed his box of bones.

We may never know exactly how

human bones came to be in place in rock formations more than 100 million years old. It is highly probable that the bones are, indeed, this old. Yet, who knows? Without that vital age-dating, no one can say positively that they are not. Every year, new and startling finds are being made at archeological sites in Africa, and each one pushes the origin of mankind back still further by another half million years or more.

Part of the mystery, of course, is why the University of Utah scientists chose not to age-date the mystery bones and clear up at least the question of their actual age.

And so the mystery remains, perhaps never to be solved. □

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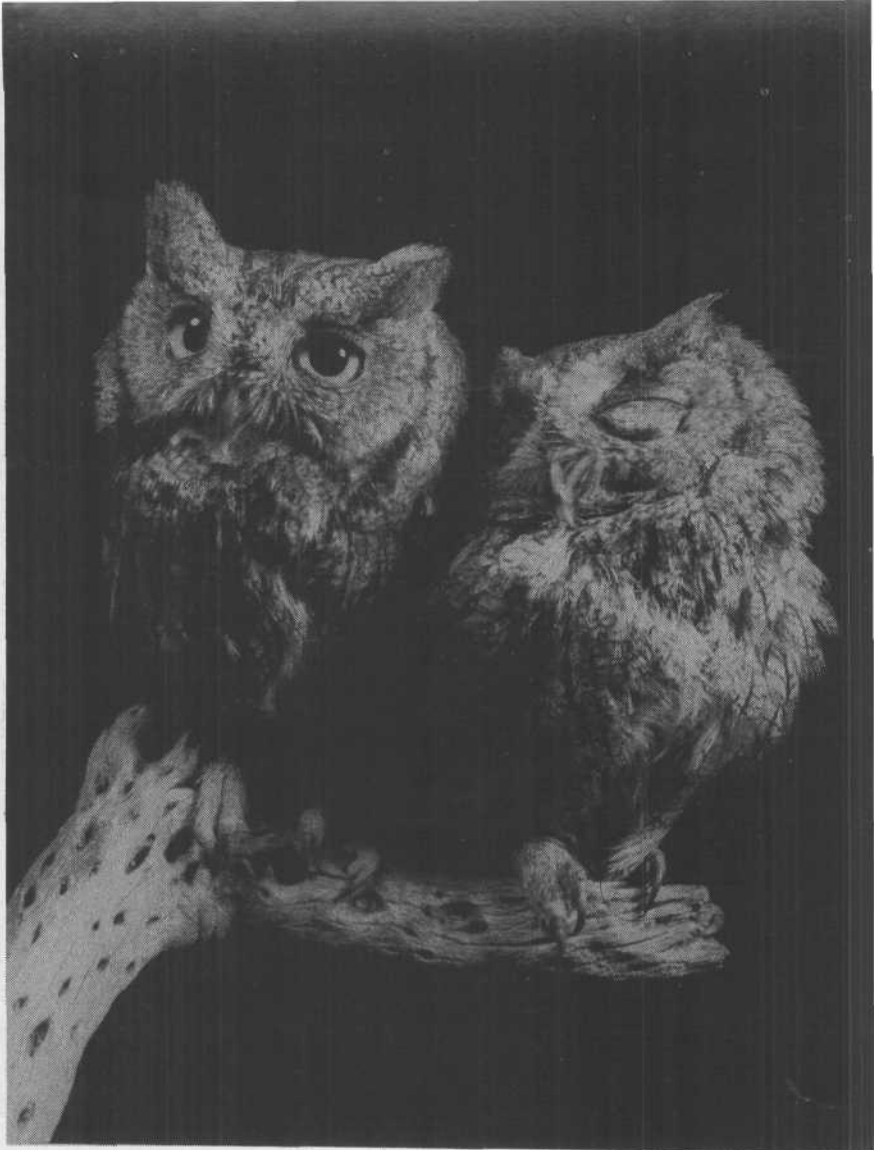
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# Desert Plant Life

by JIM CORNETT



BLADDER-POD BUSH

**W**ILDFLOWERS ARE most often thought to be found in the spring—if the winter rains have been generous. Many plant species reveal this, as shown by their beautiful displays each year in many localities throughout the Southwest. But one plant, the Bladder-pod Bush (*Isomeris arborea*), is a maverick in this respect. It will bloom at any time of the year provided ample precipitation has fallen.

Even the coldest months of January and February do not discourage this green-leaved shrub from putting forth its beautiful yellow flowers. Snow-covered plants with small, four-petaled ornaments are a sight to behold as the Bladder-pod defies the usual partnership between warm weather and blooming.

This bush grows to a height of slightly over four feet, forming a circular base with several white-barked stems growing from a common place in the ground. The many branches give the plant a dense appearance and provide numerous places from which leaves may be born. This gives the shrub a bright green coloration prior to blooming.

Look for this plant along dry stream beds, roadsides, and deep canyons at elevations from sea level to about 3,500 feet throughout the Southwest. In such localities it provides a staple food source for small rodents who eat the seeds, and hummingbirds who sip the nectar. Man, too, can partake of this plant as the newly-formed flower buds are edible although somewhat bitter. The extensive root systems give structure to the soil, allowing insects and rodents to burrow below the plant, constructing their homes.

Desert homeowners who are concerned about their wild neighbors should make this misnamed plant (the seed pods do not look like bladders) available to the native inhabitants of their area by planting this easily-germinated shrub in their yard. A few seeds can be collected from a wild plant and planted in a small hole an inch deep. Moderate watering should cause such seeds to sprout.

A native plant will not displace any animal that depends upon it for food, requires little watering, and can be just as attractive as an exotic plant. □

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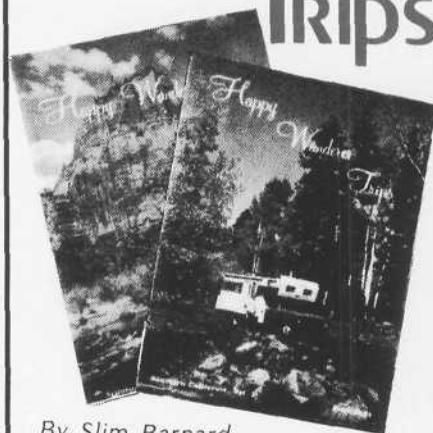


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# Rambling on Rocks

by  
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## DIAMOND: Number 10 in Hardness

**A**FTER DISCUSSING the other nine hardness standards in our past columns, it may seem to be almost ridiculous to say that diamond is number 10. About all that can really be said is that diamond will scratch all of the other nine, and none of them will scratch it. Perhaps it is again ridiculous to have a number 10 standard when there is only one directly below it, and that one being 9. It almost seems as if there needed to be only nine on the scale, and then say that anything harder than 9 must be diamond.

The thought is not unreasonable, but it must be remembered that Mohs scale was devised in the late 1800's, and there was no reason to believe that other very hard minerals would not be discovered. For that matter, there is no reason at present to feel that other very hard minerals will not be discovered. Thus, diamond as 10 is not ridiculous under those circumstances. Certainly, if a very hard mineral was discovered, it must assigned a hardness number. Does anyone want to try to find a 10½? We will look at materials higher than 10 in a later column.

In our column in the September, 1972, issue of *Desert*, we discussed diamond as "The Most Remarkable Mineral." All that we said about it, we firmly believe. However, we have always held a pet peeve about diamonds. It is undoubtedly the finest of all gems, but it has been misrepresented, so we think.

Much of the information disseminated by diamond merchants has been at least misleading. We have mentioned the perfect cleavage of diamonds before, but it is never openly talked about by the seller. He loudly proclaims that it is the hardest mineral, but says nothing about it being brittle. We will admit that many people do not understand brittleness, but diamonds will chip. One of the author's did so, when wearing a colored stone and working around machinery.

Another thing that bothers us a bit is the practice of surrounding almost any other gem with a ring of diamonds. The arguments are that a fine tourmaline, sapphire, or other gem needs to be "set off" by surrounding it with small diamonds. All this does, in our minds, is compete with the large gem. We would readily accept one or two diamonds set adjacent to give the piece of jewelry some artistic balance, but a surrounding ring, no. One often gets the impression that any other gem is poor unless it is sprinkled with diamonds. We very much disagree, as we feel that a beautiful gem (diamonds included) can easily stand alone on its beauty and unusualness.

Our greatest peeve about diamonds is the engagement ring. The diamond seller has very cleverly instilled the idea in young women that if the young man cannot bring a diamond as a token of his sincerity, he is not really worth considering. There appears to be no room for any other gem (even with a small diamond adjacent) to be considered as an engagement ring setting. The word diamond "solitaire" sums it up completely.

We have shuddered many times when acquaintances have talked about the wedding set that was being purchased. The engagement ring as a solitaire, the wedding ring a cluster of diamonds. The price was usually very high, and thus the young couple would usually find themselves paying for the rings long after they were married. Today's marriages have too much against them as it is without the added payments for diamonds.

We have often wondered what was wrong with an idea that one of our friends came up with. They originally met at a summer camp in the Mother Lode gold country. They made a trip back and panned enough gold to make the necessary rings. Then the engagement ring was set with the birthstone of each. The jeweler involved sold them the



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two stones, had the rings made, and duly made a profit on the transaction, to which he was certainly entitled. We have suggested the idea to others, and some have used it. One young couple designed the rings, and then had them manufactured to suit, and set with the birthstones. We are proud to say that the young lady involved was one of our jewelry students.

We repeatedly hear that a diamond is a good investment. We certainly disagree. If someone wants a gem of any kind, then it should be purchased with the idea that it will be worn and enjoyed. It is virtually impossible for the average person to buy any kind of gem on a wholesale basis, and diamonds are the most difficult. When a diamond of any size is bought at retail, the seller has made a profit on the transaction.

A number of other dealers have also made a profit on the same item as they moved it on its way to the retailer. If the final buyer subsequently wishes to sell the diamond at a later date, he will not be offered a profit over the original price; the offer will usually be less than he paid. The reason is simple, the one who buys it back will need to make a profit when it is sold at retail a second time, thus, he cannot offer anywhere near the original price.

Today there could possibly be an exception to this, but the exception is not as good as may be hoped. The prices of gems have risen over the past 20 years, and thus any offers for the "investment gem" could be higher than the price paid. There is some doubt in our minds if the price for a good diamond has risen enough in the last 20 years to erase the profit margin of the retailer, or go above it so that the investor can make a profit. As a sidelight, it must be remembered that whatever the price paid for the gem, the same money could have been put in some kind of savings institution, and have been drawing interest during the interim. An enormous rise in price is called for to cover any interest, also. We are not gem investors, and we firmly believe it cannot be done at a profit dealing at the retail level.

We hear much about "blue-white" diamonds. We are really not certain what it refers to, as all the stones that have been shown to us with that prefix were absolutely colorless. As far as we can determine, a stone is so-called be-

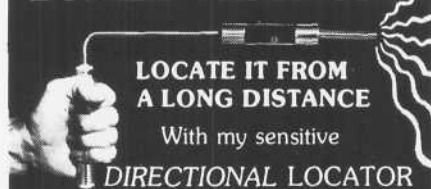
cause, in daylight (which is predominately blue) it will return, by dispersion, more blue than any other color. If the gem has any color of its own, the blue will tend to be absorbed. Thus, the blue-white diamond is really uncolored. We have seen many engagement rings that contained diamonds that were a bit off color, usually yellowish or greenish. We wonder what color it was represented as!

The pity of all of this is that, in our minds, a colored diamond is a very beautiful thing. Witness the wonderful blue of the Hope Diamond, or the canary yellow of the Tiffany Diamond. One of the most breathtaking things we know of is a fine coffee-colored diamond. Why have these fine colors (which were not rare) been discouraged? We do not know the answer.

Today, as part of the trend of fashion, colored diamonds are now becoming somewhat popular. There certainly is not any mad rush at the moment to buy them, but there is a trend. To show how capricious the whole thing can become, there is now a method of taking poorly colored stones and treating them to make the colors clean and pleasing. The method is by irradiation in a cyclotron or other atomic ray machine. The resultant colors are usually greenish to golden, and are beautiful. Now the market is ready for the buyer of colored diamonds!

No, we do not dislike diamonds; we just wonder why it has been necessary to take a wonderful gem and cloud it with an aura of misconception. Perhaps we are naive, but we feel that if the diamond were completely understood and had been carefully studied by the seller, he could have taken its virtues and presented them in such a way that the buyer could have learned to appreciate it and other gems at the same time. He does sell them all! □

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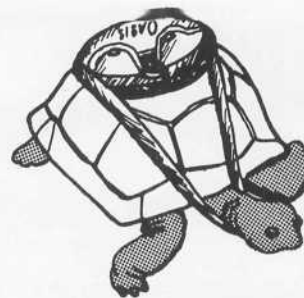
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# Letters to the Editor

Letters requesting answers must  
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## Death Valley Vacation . . .

My husband has been reading your magazine for years. We were married two years ago and now I also have become an addict . . . of your magazine, that is.

We recently spent a vacation in Death Valley. We fed some of those "wild" burros by hand, in the middle of "nowhere," spent a delightful and very informative hour visiting Mrs. Black (the mayor of Darwin) and concluded the trip at the Japanese Concentration Camp, north of Lone Pine, where we found a Japanese-American newspaper dated 1945.

Thanks to your magazine, we didn't just see Scotty's Castle (which was fascinating), but took many, many side trips to the less known places Ben has read about in *Desert* for so many years. Even made it through Titus Canyon with a camper—it was a breeze—but we won't tell anybody that. May send you an article about the trip some day.

VIRGINIA.

## Memory Lane . . .

What a pleasant surprise and lots of memories when I saw the article on Gillette, Arizona, in your magazine.

In the early 1900's, there were two adobe buildings that my grandparents, aunts and uncles lived in. They attended the one-room school in Canon, past Rock Springs. My grandparents were "Texas" Bob Heckle and wife, Anna.

Time passed and then George and Mattie Wright started a guest ranch and we visited there as kids. Then it became a ghost town again. We moved there in the late 1930's and stayed in one of the remaining adobe buildings and my sister and her family lived in the main house.

We visited there again in 1965 and the thickets had then taken over so that a lot of the area was covered. I looked for a little wild rose bush that had been there for years, but I guess the heat and lack of water finally got it.

I'm sending my copy of *Desert* to my mother, who lived there as a young woman and was courted there by my father. Thanks for a memory to be relived in thought again.

LOIS SULLIVAN THIERMAN,  
Whittier, California.

# Calendar of Events

FEBRUARY 14, 15 & 16, Tucson Gem & Mineral Society, 21st Annual Show, Tucson Community Center Exhibition Hall, 350 S. Church St., Tucson, Ariz. Dealer space filled. Admission, \$1.00 adults, children under 14 free with adult. Contact: Everett O. Wogstad, 7430 N. Village Ave., Tucson, Ariz. 85704.

FEBRUARY 15 & 16, Sixth Annual Antique Bottle Show and Sale of the Peninsula Bottle Collectors of San Mateo County. Home Arts Building, San Mateo County Fairgrounds,

San Mateo, Calif. Admission and parking free.

FEBRUARY 22 & 23, 7th Annual San Fernando Valley Gem Fair, Glendale Civic Auditorium, 1401 N. Verdugo Rd., Glendale, Calif. Admission \$1.50; ages 12-17 25c; under 12 free. Displays, dealers, demonstrations, club sales. Free parking. Chairman: Claude Schapers, P. O. Box 44356, Panorama City, Calif. 91402.

FEBRUARY 23-MARCH 1, Charter Centennial Week kicks off a two-year celebration for Carson City, Nevada state capital. Week-long activities. Special tours daily through capitol, governor's mansion, Nevada state museum and legislative buildings. Write Box 904, Carson City, Nevada 89701.

FEBRUARY 28-MARCH 1 & 2, Phoenix Gem and Mineral Show, "Western Roundup of Gems" sponsored by Maricopa Lapidary Society, Inc. State Fairgrounds, Phoenix, Ariz. Overnight camper parking. Field trip. Lou Irons Chmn., 2046 W. Orange Dr., Phoenix, Ariz. 85015.

FEBRUARY 28-MARCH 9, Imperial Valley Gem and Mineral Society presents their 28th annual show as part of the California Midwinter Fair at Imperial, Calif. Field trip: Cerro Pinto, Mexico on March 8th. Dealers, area for trailers and campers (no hookups). Chairman: Bob Wright, 1028 W. Adams, El Centro, California 92243.

MARCH 1 & 2, Ventura Gem & Mineral Society's 13th Annual Show, "Artistry from Nature," Ventura County Fairgrounds, Ventura, Calif. Dealers full - camping. Show chairman: Frank King, 684 Guiberson Rd., Fillmore, CA 93015.

MARCH 8 & 9, 13th Annual Spring Parade of Gems, Elks Club, 1000 Lily Hill Drive. Sponsors Needles Gem and Mineral Club. P. O. Box 762, Needles, Calif. 92363. Chairman: Bob Brocks. Dealers filled.

MARCH 14-16, 15th Annual Southwest Gem & Mineral Show, Villita Assembly Hall, 401 Villita St., San Antonio, Texas.

MARCH 15 & 16, "Gem Roundup" sponsored by the Sequoia Mineral Society, Dinuba, California, Memorial Building. Chairman: Sam Phillips, 10300 Kings River Rd., Reedley, Calif. 93654.

MARCH 15 & 16, Los Angeles Lapidary Society's 34th Annual Show "March of Gems," Liberal Arts Masonic Temple, 2244 Westwood Blvd., Los Angeles. Free Admission and parking. Dealers, snack bar, lectures, demonstrations, exhibits. Contact: Zan Arnt, 539 East Hazel, Inglewood, Calif. 90301.

## Ridge Route Reminisce . . .

I have just finished reading the December issue and enjoyed the article on the Ridge Route.

Way back in 1932 I drove over the route on my way home to my state. I remember well the many turns and twists on that road. Last year I drove the new road and there is quite a difference.

CONWAY MUNRO,  
Ferguson, Missouri.

## Desert Devotee Returns . . .

I've been an avid reader of *Desert Magazine* for over five years now. *Desert* is hard to find in such places as North Dakota, Minnesota and Montana, but I've cast my feet for good in sunny old California.

HOLLIS E. KEYS,  
Lompoc, California.

## Pupfish Memories . . .

Your November issue of *Desert Magazine* brought back memories of years gone by through your article on the tiny fish in Devil's Hole, now part of the Death Valley National Monument located at Ash Meadows, Nevada.

I lived for a number of years about a mile from Devil's Hole and on occasion we would go down into the hole and dangle our feet in the water and watch the little fish darting about.

I also enjoyed the articles on Rhyolite and have several souvenirs from there gleaned many years ago. We visited Wes (Westmoreland) at his establishment in the old railroad station many times.

There are very few places around Death Valley and surrounding area I have missed seeing, and the memories of that country are some of the happiest of my life, rough as some of them were at the time. Thank you for bringing them back in your magazine.

IRIS SMITH BYRD,  
Salton City, California.



# INDIAN BOOKS OF INTEREST



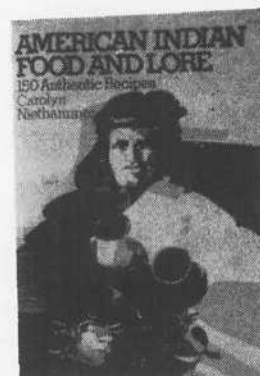
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**TURQUOIS** by Joseph E. Pogue. [Memoirs of the National Academy of Sciences.] First printed in 1915, *Turquoise* has in its third printing (1973) been updated in many ways. Among them are listed currently-operated Turquoise mines, more color plates. The book is full of incredible results of research and an in-depth study of this fascinating mineral of superficial origin. Hardcover, 175 pages, beautifully illustrated, \$15.00.



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